2008

Interaction in languages other than English classes in Western Australian primary and secondary schools: Theory, practice and perceptions

Rita Tognini
Edith Cowan University

Recommended Citation

Tognini, R. (2008). *Interaction in languages other than English classes in Western Australian primary and secondary schools: Theory, practice and perceptions*. https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/26

INTERACTION IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH CLASSES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS: THEORY, PRACTICE AND PERCEPTIONS

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of
Doctor of Philosophy (Applied Linguistics)

by

Rita Tognini

BA, Graduate Diploma in Intercultural Studies, BEd, MEd.

**Faculty of Education and Arts
School of International, Cultural and Community Studies**

September, 2007

Edith Cowan University

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive study investigated the interaction of teachers and learners in ten primary and secondary school languages other than English (LOTE) classes in Western Australia, with the aim of providing a detailed picture of its nature and patterns. Teachers' and learners' perceptions of this interaction were also examined as part of the study, through interviews conducted with them.

Classroom interaction data were analysed using theoretical frameworks which drew on cognitive interactionist theory of SLA, but also included relevant aspects of sociocultural SLA theory. Initial analysis revealed more teacher-fronted than peer interaction and notable levels of L1 as well as L2 use in most classes. The Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) discourse structure was prevalent, but included an expanded version in addition to the restricted version involving only three turns.

The study found that teacher-learner interaction featured various types of negative feedback, positive evidence and considerable reliance on interactional routines such as elicitation, non-corrective repetition, drilling and reinforcement. The patterns underlying this interaction included a two-part sequence associated with the restricted version of the IRF, the three-part sequences identified by Oliver (2000) and two additional patterns. The study pointed to an association between the expanded version of the IRF and interaction featuring feedback and other teacher input identified by research as facilitating learning.

The features of learner-learner interaction revealed by this study were linked to learners' language choices and the nature of tasks undertaken. Interaction carried out mainly in L2 involved both activities that concentrated on language practice and those with a communicative orientation. The former featured mainly interactional routines, while interactional moves were also evident in the latter. Tasks where students collaborated to construct an L2 text occurred mainly in L1. However, analysis revealed that learners often focused on L2 lexis and form, suggesting that L1 interaction may also contribute to L2 learning.

Teachers' and learners' perceptions of interaction were broadly consistent with the study's findings about its nature and patterns in the classes studied. Both parties valued interaction for the opportunities for practice it provided and its contribution to student motivation, with students emphasising their preference for peer over teacher-directed interaction. Teachers highlighted the challenges they faced in promoting student-initiated L2 use, while learners stressed their difficulties in using L2 and their perceived lack of linguistic skills for this. Teachers' views of interaction appeared to be particularly influenced by their classroom experience and learners' needs, rather than by theory and research.

A number of important insights and issues emerged from this study. The study drew attention to the possible contribution of positive evidence in facilitating learning for low proficiency students. It raised questions about the relationship between proficiency level and learner capacity to benefit from implicit forms of negative feedback. It highlighted the complex relationship between L1 and L2 use in LOTE classes and pointed to the influence of teacher and student perceptions on interaction. The study emphasised the characteristics of the LOTE classroom learning context and pointed to the need for further research in this area.

DECLARATION

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASLPR	Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating
CT	Focus communicative tasks
EFL	English as a foreign language
ESL	English as a second language
FonF	Focus on form
FLP	Functional language practice
ICT	Interactive Communication Technology
IRF	Initiation-Response-Feedback
LOTE	Languages other than English
L-L	Learner-learner
L-T	Learner-teacher
NF	Negative feedback
NNS	Nonnative speaker
NS	Native speaker
SES	Socioeconomic status
T-C	Teacher-class
TEE	Tertiary Entrance Examination
TL	Target Language
T-SG	Teacher-small group

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT FOR THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Over the past 25 years, pedagogy in the second language classroom has increasingly focused on providing learning experiences which expose learners to authentic language and help them produce their second language in meaningful ways. Use of approaches to teaching and learning which maximise opportunities for interaction are central to such pedagogy. One of the important influences on the development and adoption of this pedagogy (commonly referred to as the communicative approach to language teaching) has been second language acquisition (SLA) research which pointed to an important role for conversational interaction in the language learning process.

This study investigates the interaction of learners of languages other than English (henceforth referred to as LOTE) in primary and secondary school classes in Western Australia. The study has been motivated by a number of factors. Some are related to the present ecology of the language education landscape locally and nationally; others to current issues in SLA theory and research and in second language pedagogy; and, still others, to a desire to make connections between SLA theory and research and classroom practice in language education. These issues and their relationship are sketched in the background to the study which follows below.

1.2 Background to the study

1.2.1 Research context

Interaction describes the interpersonal activity that takes places during face-to-face communication[1]. It is a key concept in SLA research. Its role in second language learning has been intensively investigated since the late seventies and its importance has been established by research derived from "different but generally complementary theoretical perspectives" (Mackey, 2002, p.391), most significantly those based on cognitive interactionist and sociocultural constructs of SLA. The cognitively based Interaction

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[1] In SLA research, it also refers to "the intrapersonal activity involved in mental processing" (Ellis, 1999, p.3).

Hypothesis developed by Long (1985; 1996) "suggests that second language interaction can facilitate development by providing opportunities for learners to receive comprehensible input and negative feedback, as well as modify their own output, test hypotheses and notice gaps in their interlanguage" (Mackey, 2002, p.380). SLA theory that has a sociocultural perspective stresses the social nature of learning and the way it is mediated by the use of the symbolic tool of language (Lantolf, 2000). Sociocultural SLA research identifies the scaffolding provided by the expert (teacher, more competent peer or other interlocutor) to the learner in the completion of a task as a type of interaction that is crucial to learning.

One line of research linked to the Interaction Hypothesis that has been pursued for almost two decades is the investigation of the role of a particular kind of interaction in learning– *negotiation for meaning*. This focuses on the nature and effect of the interactional moves that occur when speakers try to prevent or repair some kind of communication breakdown. Related to this is research concerning the nature of the feedback that speakers give each other– whether it is *explicit,* as when overt correction occurs, or *implicit,* as with recasts - and its effect.

Exploration of the social factors that impact on learning has been a central concern of interactional research from sociocultural perspective. This research has focused on both the broad social context as well as the dynamics of relationships between individual interlocutors.

Because much second language learning takes place in classroom settings, the nature, quality and impact of classroom interaction is of interest to applied linguists and language educators alike. Chaudron (1988, p.152), in his comprehensive review of second language learning classroom-based research, drew attention to the need for research into the interaction occurring in this setting:

> The nature of interaction in L2 classrooms is perhaps the most critical issue concerning formal second language learning, and although the research …suggests important ways in which current instructional practice may be both effective for

and detrimental to promotion of TL skills, the complete picture remains to be developed.

Chaudron (1988) also noted important differences between foreign and second language contexts and pointed to the need for research which would provide more extensive comparisons between these contexts, as well as investigate the issues of exposure to authentic language activities and input in the foreign language context.

Interactional research has increasingly investigated second language learning in instructed language learning contexts. Chaudron (2001, p.68), in a more recent review of classroom-based research, noted "The increasing effort seen in the 1990s to document the details of classroom interaction with respect to linguistic and social features…" However, much interactional research, like other SLA research, continues to be concerned with second language learning involving English[2] in contexts where English is the dominant code, and to involve adult learners to a greater extent than child learners. In recent years, immersion programs have been the site of a considerable amount of interactional research involving LOTE, particularly the Canadian French immersion programs, but also immersion programs for a number of languages set up in Australia (Clyne, Jenkins, Chen, Tsokalidou & Wallner, 1995; de Courcy, 1995; Gearon, 2004; Harbon, 2006). In contrast, few studies have investigated interaction in conventional LOTE primary and secondary school classes[3], despite the fact that the vast majority of Australian and overseas LOTE learners undertake their language study in this context. Calman and Daniel (1998), writing about Canada, where almost 90% of learners of French are in conventional or 'core' French language programs and where official policy clearly considers immersion programs to be for a minority of learners, commented that, "Despite the preponderance of children in core French programs, these programs have received relatively little attention in the research literature as compared with immersion programs" (p. 281).

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[2] Van Pattern & Lee (1990, p.21) point out that, "If one examines the publications of American journals that treat non-primary language acquisition, one is struck by the overwhelming preponderance of papers that use English as their data base." More specifically, Ohta (2001) noted that research interest in corrective feedback has been most prolific in ESL and immersion classes.
[3] In conventional LOTE programs, the language itself is the focus of instruction rather than being the vehicle for teaching particular content, as in immersion programs.

Macaro (1997), discussing issues relating to classroom interaction in the context of the implementation of the National Curriculum for languages in England, also pointed to a gap in the SLA literature regarding school-aged learners in conventional languages programs.

Thus, it appears that the gaps in classroom interaction research in relation to LOTE identified by Chaudron (1988) almost twenty years ago have only been partly addressed.

1.2.2 The Western Australia LOTE learning and teaching context

Developments in the teaching of languages in Western Australia and across Australia over the last fifteen years point to classroom interaction as an important area for ongoing investigation for three reasons: policy development which has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of students studying a LOTE; the adoption of communicative syllabuses, accompanied by the provision of professional learning for teachers on the communicative approach; and, the results of tests which suggest limited language achievement after a number of years of study.

Policy development for language learning and teaching at the national level (Lo Bianco, 1987) led the then Education Department of Western Australia to develop local policies (*LOTE 2000: New Horizons Strategy* in 1995, and *LOTE Beyond 2000* in 2001) which mandated the study of languages from Years 3-10 and included resources for the progressive expansion of programs to include the majority of students in these years. The implementation of these policies increased participation in LOTE programs dramatically in the last ten years, especially in primary schools, but also at secondary level. Thus in 2006, 386,640 public school students from kindergarten to Year 10 studied a LOTE; 20,217 were in Year 6, 20,128 in Year 7 and 17,248 in Year 10[4]. The vast majority of learners participates in conventional language programs in one of the following languages: Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Japanese, Italian and Indonesian. Partial immersion programs are conducted in two primary schools (French in one school and Italian in the other) and in one secondary school (Italian).

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[4] These figures were provided by the Western Australian Department of Education and Training. Data for participation in LOTE programs K-10 in Catholic and Independent schools are not available.

Key curriculum initiatives since the late eighties identified interaction as a crucial element of learning and pedagogy. In particular, the *Australian Language Levels Guidelines* (Scarino, Vale, McKay & Clark, 1988) - henceforth the *ALL Guidelines* - articulated an approach to the teaching of languages that reflected developments in SLA research at that time and presented a comprehensive framework for syllabus development based on five broad goals of language learning, at the centre of which was communication. These goals were to be achieved through activities that provided opportunities for interactive language use in a range of oral and written contexts. The *ALL Guidelines* became the basis of syllabus development for both Asian and European languages nationally and locally. The majority of LOTE teachers in Western Australia were introduced to the communicative approach to language teaching as part of the professional learning program which accompanied the adoption of syllabuses based on the *ALL Guidelines*.

The *ALL Guidelines* also significantly influenced the outcomes-based frameworks for languages curriculum developed more recently in Western Australia. The LOTE Learning Area Statement in the *Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia* (The Curriculum Council, 1998)[5], has six major learning outcomes related to: Listening and Responding and Speaking; Viewing, Reading and Responding; Writing; Cultural Understandings; The System of the Target Language; and, Language Learning Strategies. The LOTE Learning Area Statement promotes approaches to language learning and teaching which encourage active involvement of the learner in meaningful interactive activities centred on the communicative use of the target language. *Student Outcome Statements* (Education Department of Western Australia, 1998)[6] were developed to "provide developmental sequences which show progression towards achievement of the first three LOTE learning outcomes of the Curriculum Council's Learning Area Statement for LOTE" (p. 3). Appendix 1 describes the outcomes, over eight levels, for Listening and Responding and Speaking.

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[5] The *Curriculum Framework* outlines what all Western Australian students must be able to understand, know and do as a result of participating in schooling in terms of thirteen broad outcomes. It includes eight learning area statements, one of which is for LOTE. Each statement describes the major outcomes sought for that learning area and examines the implication for learning and teaching for the four phases of schooling: early childhood; middle childhood; early adolescence and, late adolescence.

[6] These are now called *Progress Maps*.

State-wide tests conducted with Year 7 and Year 10 students of French and Japanese in 2001 (Department of Education and Training, 2003) assessed achievement in terms of the levels described in the *Student Outcome Statements* and found an increase of mean performance from Year 7 to Year 10 in both languages. At Year 7, after approximately four years of LOTE study, most students achieved level 2 for the Listening and Responding and Speaking major outcome. This meant that they listened to the target language and gave simple formulaic responses in the language. At Year 10, after three to seven years of study[7], most students achieved level 3 or listened to longer spoken texts the target language and responded using predominantly well-rehearsed language.[8] These are modest achievements and no doubt reflect a number of factors including the limited contact time for LOTE – a recommended 60 minutes per week for primary school programs and around 120 minutes for secondary school programs.

The state-wide tests discussed above focused on student performance and not the nature and quality of classroom interaction. However, teachers were asked to self-report on whether they provided a 'language-rich environment' by responding to a Yes/No question on this matter. The results indicated that the nature of the linguistic environment did not have a significant effect on performance. Nevertheless, the report noted that "It may be worthwhile to investigate this variable in greater detail in future study" (Department of Education and Training, 2003, p.20). A definition of what constitutes a 'language-rich environment' was not provided in the report. This, the nature of the data (self-reports) and some overseas classroom research suggest further investigation may fruitful. For example, a study of a high school Spanish class by Hall (2004), which investigated teacher-learner interaction over a year found a consistently low level of intellectual, social and linguistic content which affected both motivation and learning. Mitchell (2000) criticised the attainment targets for

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[7] Not all students had commenced their LOTE study in Year 3.

[8] The tests found that years of study had a small but positive impact on performance. Brown, Hill and Iwashita (2000), reporting on an Australia-wide study which investigated progress in LOTE learning, found that increased years of study did not necessarily produce improved test scores in all four language examined (French, Japanese, Indonesian and Italian); nor was improvement uniform across the skill areas tested. For example, increased years of study resulted in improved scores in listening for students of French and Italian, and for pronunciation and fluency for learners of Italian, but not those of French.

speaking of the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages[9] for presenting a model of progression that does not reflect research-based views of language development. As a result, the targets tend to promote a pedagogy that has similarities to that described by Hall (2004) as it emphasises rehearsal and memorization over more creative exploration of language use, encourages teacher control rather than learner autonomy and is overly preoccupied with accuracy.

In summary, as a result of policy decisions taken over the last decade, the study of a LOTE is mandated in Western Australian schools from Years 3-10. Interaction is central to the pedagogy that has been promoted for these language programs. Professional learning and syllabuses which reflect the communicative approach and promote interaction were provided for teachers in the first half of the nineties. How this pedagogy has been enacted in classrooms has not been investigated. Results of state-wide testing in several languages show that progress in the development of listening and speaking skills occurs very slowly between Years 3-10 in Western Australian schools. A significant factor in this may be the limited time allocated to LOTE programs. The nature and quality of the interaction that occurs is likely to be another important factor and is therefore the focus of this study.

1.3 Significance of the study

Given the theoretical interest in the role of interaction in second language learning and the developments in the teaching of LOTE in Western Australia described in the previous section, there are five reasons why this study is significant. Firstly, there is an acknowledged need in the literature for further investigation into *classroom* interaction, as distinct from research in this area undertaken in laboratory or experimental contexts (Breen 2001; Chaudron 1988, 2001; Ellis 1990; 1999; Foster, 1998; Lyster, 2002; Mitchell, 1989; van Lier 1988; 1996). The results of laboratory or experimental studies are not necessarily able to be replicated in classroom-based studies. For example, research undertaken with ESL/EFL adults suggests that classroom learners may be reluctant to undertake the negotiation for meaning (Foster, 1998; Williams, 1999), one type of interaction that has been demonstrated to occur in experimental contexts. Similarly, Nicholas, Lightbown and

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[9] The attainment targets are the English equivalents of the Western Australian LOTE *Student Outcome Statements*.

Spada (2001), in reviewing research on the effects of recasts, another form of interactional feedback, point to differences between the findings of classroom and laboratory studies on this area. Allied to these matters is the debate about the influence of context or "whether social and sociolinguistic factors influence…psycholinguistic processes to such an extent that they too must be included in the theory" (Tarone, 2000, p. 182).

The second reason that this study is important has to do with the characteristics of the particular population of LOTE learners being investigated and the possible effect of these characteristics on the nature and pattern of the interaction they engage in the classroom. The two characteristics in question are age and level of proficiency. In contrast to a great deal of other interactional research, the subjects of this study are child and adolescent LOTE learners attending primary and secondary schools, rather than adults in EFL/ESL or LOTE courses at tertiary level.

Unlike the subjects of most existing research, the primary and secondary learners in this study generally possess relatively low levels of proficiency, despite having studied their target language for a number of years. Studies involving EFL/ESL learners (whether child or adult) or LOTE learners from immersion programs have commonly had medium to high levels of proficiency[10]. There is, therefore, little known about the nature and pattern of interaction of learners in conventional LOTE classes whose proficiency level is typically much lower. A number of research studies have pointed to proficiency as an important variable in enabling learners to benefit from interaction (Mackey & Philp, 1998; Mackey, 1999; Williams, 2001; Nicholas, Lightbown & Spada, 2001).

There is, however, evidence to suggest that the spoken productions of early learners in conventional LOTE classes are a combination of formulaic language (prefabricated routines and chunks that are taught or emerge from classroom routines) and creatively constructed utterances that reflect underlying grammatical rules (Mitchell, 2000). Myles, Hooper and Mitchell (1998) documented the emergence of creatively constructed utterances in a group of early secondary learners of French studied over a two year period. This study

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[10] Generally, the proficiency level of learners in these studies was level 2, 2+ or above according to the Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating (ASLPR).

demonstrated the dynamic relationship between the formulaic language used by learners in their interactions and their creative constructions, and argued that the interaction of these two elements contributed to learners' language development. Myles, Mitchell and Hooper (1999) showed the interaction of these two types of production in the development of interrogatives, highlighting the considerable length of time taken by learners to progress through each stage of development and the continued use of chunks even after learners had unpacked the underlying rules.

The need to discover and better understand the particular contexts that facilitate the engagement that leads to interaction among LOTE classroom learners is the third reason why this study is significant. Batstone (2002) argues that learners with limited proficiency may find it difficult to profit from interactional contexts and tasks designed to promote negotiation of meaning. Batstone's arguments for paying greater attention to the social context of language learning, as well as the cognitive aspects, draw on work done in this area by a numbers of researchers, notably Allwright (1989) and Breen (1985; 2001).

The fourth reason for the significance of this study is that it connects to important debates currently occurring in SLA about the need to broaden theoretical and methodological perspectives and orientations in the area. There has been ongoing debate between SLA researchers with a socio-cultural orientation (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Lantolf, 2000; Swain, 2000; van Lier, 1996) and those within the cognitive interactionist paradigm about fundamental questions such as what constitutes interaction, what type of interaction promotes language development, and, the respective roles of learners and teachers in the second language learning process. The distinction made by Gass (1998) between 'use' and 'acquisition' in her reply to Firth and Wagner (1997) highlights an aspect of this debate that is of relevance to the interaction that occurs in LOTE classrooms. This distinction is strong in the cognitive interactionist literature, with Chaudron (1988) seeing interaction in a general sense – that is when learners are *merely interacting* as different from interaction in "the narrower sense of negotiation of meaning in learner-learner or teacher-learner communicative exchanges" (pp.106-7). However, Breen (2001) argues that this distinction is not tenable within the discourse of a classroom, where there is a constant interrelationship between these two aspects of language learning.

The final reason for the importance of this study connects to the outcomes sought for LOTE programs in Western Australian schools as described the LOTE Learning Area Statement and associated *Student Outcome Statements*. They imply a communicative orientation in which language use and interaction feature strongly. While data has been collected about levels of achievement for some languages, the nature and quality of classroom interaction in language programs in Western Australian schools remains unexamined. By investigating this topic for two of the more widely taught languages (French and Italian), this study aims to provide useful insights about classroom interaction for teachers of those languages and for researchers, policy makers and LOTE teacher educators.

In summary, this study is significant for five reasons. The broad topic of classroom interaction is one which has been acknowledged as needing further investigation. The LOTE context, the locus of this study, is acknowledged as needing particular attention. Of special interest is the kind of input made available to learners and the interaction that it appears to generate, especially among child and adolescent learners whose language proficiency is not high. The study will also focus on the particular contexts of engagement within the LOTE classroom that appear to facilitate interaction and describe teacher and learner perspectives about these contexts. Two additional aspects of the study are of importance. The study will connect to broader theoretical debates about SLA which impact on interaction studies. Finally, the study has the potential to inform the practice of interaction in LOTE classrooms locally and across Australia.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate and describe the nature and pattern of the interaction of learners of French and Italian in conventional language programs in primary and secondary schools in Western Australia. As outlined above, the pedagogy officially promoted in programs for these and other languages taught in schools is communicative in nature and oral and written activities and tasks which involve interaction in L2 are central to the learning experiences which it is recommended be provided in these programs. Only anecdotal information is available on what this actually means in practice. Moreover, it appears that the extent to which teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction in classes from these languages programs contains the features identified by SLA research as

facilitative of language learning has never been examined. Similar patterns of interaction to those which occur in other language learning contexts seem to be assumed.

The study also aims to explore the kind of language use that is associated with interaction, the classroom contexts which facilitate engagement in interaction and teachers' and learners' perceptions of the interaction process. It is hoped that the study will contribute to knowledge about language learning as it occurs in the LOTE classroom context, as well as informing and illuminating policy and practice.

French and Italian have been selected for this research for a number of reasons. Firstly, the inclusion of two languages in the study is likely to strengthen the applicability of its findings to the broader context. Secondly, both French and Italian are studied by a large number of learners in primary and secondary schools. As both are Romance languages, they share many similarities as well as being different in significant ways. For example, Italian presents fewer difficulties in pronunciation and has a simpler orthographic system than French. The two languages have different histories as school subjects, with French being the modern language traditionally offered at secondary level. Italian, on the other hand, was introduced in the late seventies, largely in response to the large number of speakers of this language in the community. Both languages are taught in primary and secondary schools. Finally, these two particular languages were chosen because they are both known by the researcher.

1.5 Organisation of the thesis

The thesis consists of ten chapters. This first chapter has described the context for the research undertaken as part of this study by sketching the background in terms of SLA research and language teaching research and practice, highlighting the significance of the study and detailing its purposes. Chapter 2 presents a detailed review of the SLA literature relating to interaction, with particular focus on interaction studies undertaken in the classroom context. It also examines research related to teacher and learner perception of language learning. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used for the study. It provides information about the site of the research, the participants and data collection processes and explains the research design, procedures and data analysis.

Chapters 4-9 present the findings of the research study. Chapter 4 describes, in detail, the context of the ten LOTE classes investigated. It identifies the participation structures through which interaction occurred, teachers' and learners' language choices, the types of tasks and activities undertaken and the discourse structures observed. The nature and pattern of teacher-learner interaction in the classes studied is described in Chapters 5 and 6, while Chapter 7 reports on learner-learner interaction. Teacher and learner perceptions of interaction are the focus of Chapters 8 and 9 respectively. The final chapter of the thesis, Chapter 10, presents and discusses the key findings, considers the issues they raise and their implications for research and pedagogy and outlines the study's principal methodological limitations.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The relationship between interaction and learning, in both naturalistic and classroom contexts, has been an important concern of SLA research since the early 1980s. As has been noted by a number of eminent SLA researchers, exploration of this area was originally stimulated by Hatch (1978), who "urged researchers to turn their attention away from questions about how L2 structure learning *led to* the learners' communicative use of L2, and instead to examine how the learning of L2 structure *evolved out of* communicative use" (Pica, 1994, p. 494). Hatch's insight appears to have been the catalyst for theorising and research which led to the articulation of three key hypotheses regarding conversational interaction and second language learning, namely: the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1981, 1982); the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1983; 1985; 1996); and the output hypothesis (Swain, 1985; 1995). These hypotheses formed the basis of a theoretical orientation to SLA often referred to as 'cognitive interactionist'. More recently, interaction has received considerable attention from SLA research based on sociocultural theory, a theoretical approach which draws on theories of mind developed by Vygosky (Lantolf, 2000) and gives prominence to social processes and contextual factors in second language learning.

The theoretical work of Krashen, Long and Swain stimulated the investigation of second language learning in the classroom context and influenced the development of classroom pedagogy which gave interaction an important role in the learning process - the communicative approach. A key focus of second language classroom research since the 1990s has been the documentation of the linguistic and social features of classroom interaction (Chaudron, 2001). This chapter describes the theoretical context for interaction research and discusses the findings of key interaction research studies, with particular attention given to those undertaken in second language classrooms. The chapter also outlines research related to teacher and student perceptions about language learning and briefly examines methodological issues related to this research study.

2.2 Theoretical context

Thinking and research about interaction at first emphasised its role in providing input to learners. As Swain (2000) observed, this emphasis can be traced back to Krashen's input hypothesis. According to the input hypothesis (Krashen 1981; 1982), comprehensible input made available to and understood by the learner is the crucial factor in second language acquisition. Krashen (1982) identifies the use of context by the learner to infer meaning and the provision of simplified input by the teacher as important ways in which input becomes comprehensible to the learner. He argues that comprehensible input is likely to be most effective when it is a little above the learner's current level of development and expressed this notion by means of the metaphor of $i + 1$.

Krashen (1981) distinguishes between *acquisition* and *learning*[1] and regards them as completely separate processes. Acquisition is considered an implicit or subconscious process which takes place when learners use language for communication. The explicit process of learning involves learners attending consciously to language in order to understand and memorise the rules. Thus, the position held by Krashen is that acquisition can only occur when the learner focuses on conveying meaning and that learning cannot be transformed into acquisition through practice or error correction. According to Krashen, the role for linguistic knowledge that has been 'learned' is limited to monitoring acquired language by focusing on form, something which can only occur if the learner has time to access the learned knowledge.

The interaction hypothesis as first articulated by Long (1983; 1985) also emphasised the role of comprehensible input in second language learning. In addition, however, it focused attention on the type of interaction that was more likely to make input comprehensible to learners. Long identifies *conversational or interactional adjustments* as the most effective means of promoting comprehension. The particular conversational adjustments that interested Long were *clarification requests* and *confirmation checks* and, *comprehension checks*. For Long, the presence of these interactional features indicates

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[1] This study follows Ellis (1999) and uses 'acquisition' and 'learning' interchangeably.

that *negotiation for meaning* is occurring and it is this *negotiated interaction* which provides more comprehensible input to the learner and therefore promotes acquisition.

Long demonstrates how an indirect relationship between conversational adjustments and acquisition can be deduced:

> Step1: Show that (a) linguistic/conversational adjustments (b) promote comprehension of input.
> Step 2: Show that (b) comprehensible input promotes (c) acquisition.
> Step 3: Deduce that (a) linguistic/conversational adjustments promote (c) acquisition.
>
> (Long, 1985, p. 378)

According to Long (1983), it is the greater frequency of these conversational adjustments or negotiation for meaning in NS-NNS interaction, as compared to NS-NS interaction, that makes that feature of NS-NNS interaction potentially significant in terms of SLA. The importance of conversational adjustments is as strategies for overcoming comprehension difficulties, but also as possible corrective feedback for the learner. The role of the corrective feedback provided through negotiated interaction in acquisition would be addressed by Long (1996) when he reformulated the interaction hypothesis.

Following Long's initial theorising about interaction, a number of empirical studies investigated the proposition that negotiated interaction increased the comprehensible input available to learners. The studies provided evidence to support Long's (1985) assertions, without necessarily establishing a nexus between the provision of additional comprehensible input and acquisition. Pica, Young and Doughty (1987), in a study that involved two groups of adult ESL learners completing a listening task, demonstrated that the group that was able to undertake negotiated interaction with their NS interlocutors scored significantly higher on the task than the group that could only listen. Loschky (1994) compared the effect of pre-modified input, and input that involved negotiated interaction on comprehension, retention and acquisition of Japanese L2 vocabulary items and locative constructions. This study found a positive effect for negotiated interaction on comprehension, but no effect on retention and acquisition. Gass and Varonis (1994) investigated the impact of pre-modified input and unmodified input, with and without

interaction, on the comprehension and production of adult ESL learners. Only the negotiated input had a significant impact on subsequent production, suggesting that negotiated interaction may have a positive effect on later language use. Negotiated input had a positive effect on NNS comprehension of NSs, but contrary to expectations, it did not improve NS comprehension of NNSs. However, a replication of this study by Polio and Gass (1998) found that negotiation had a positive effect on NS comprehension of NNSs. The researchers suggested that the results of the earlier study may have been affected by individual participants' strategic ability and by expectations in the dyads about roles relating to giving and receiving information.

A longitudinal study of two child ESL learners conducted by Sato (1986) raised questions about the capacity of comprehensible input alone to account for acquisition. The study found that the acquisition of verbal inflections which marked past time reference were not facilitated by conversational adjustments, while adverbial expressions and lexical past verbs were. It also drew attention to the fact that "Certain aspects of conversational structure appear to facilitate the acquisition of some linguistic coding devices but not others" (Sato, 1986, p. 44). In her review of research on interaction, Pica (1994) argued that the role of negotiated interaction went beyond just giving learners help with comprehension of L2 input. Pica claimed that by stimulating both NS and learners to repeat, reformulate, segment and move about parts of utterances, such interaction gave learners information about L2 grammar and lexis, and about their own interlanguage that might become linguistic data for the learner in the short-term and perhaps even in the longer term.

The findings of research from French immersion programs pointed to gaps in the acquisition of these learners and thus raised questions about the adequacy of the receptively oriented input and interaction hypotheses. Drawing on this research and a model of acquisition that included discourse and sociolinguistic competence as well as the acquisition of grammar (Canale & Swain, 1980; Swain, 1985; 1995), Swain suggested that production of linguistic output by learners might also be important to learning. Swain challenged the proposition that it was primarily comprehensible input that facilitated

grammatical acquisition. She suggested that "comprehensible input contributed differentially to second language acquisition depending on the nature of the input and the aspect of second language acquisition one is concerned with" (Swain, 1985, p. 247). Swain (1985; 1995) argued for a prominent role for *'comprehensible output'* in the acquisition process. In her view, engaging in conversation or some other kind of production forces learners to draw on their knowledge of L2 syntax to make themselves comprehensible to their interlocutor, rather than just limiting themselves to comprehending what was said to them. Thus it is not just any output that contributes to learners' language development, but rather *'pushed output'*. According to Swain, it is precisely this process that appeared to be missing from the French immersion learners' experience. They received plenty of input and quickly developed strategies for making themselves understood. However, as they relied in a limited way on L2 morphology and syntax, they appeared not to acquire some key elements.

Swain (1995) proposed three functions for 'pushed output' in learners' interlanguage development. She argues that it: 1) triggers learner's awareness of the gap between L2 and their own interlanguage; 2) enables learners to test their existing 'hypotheses' about language structures through interaction with an interlocutor and make modifications in response to feedback; and, 3) promotes conscious reflection about language. The first two functions involve similar processes to those that would feature in the reformulation of the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1996) [as discussed below] – *attention, noticing, conversational adjustments* involving *feedback* provided through negotiation for meaning. The third function does not seem to have an exact equivalent in the interaction hypothesis. It focuses on an explicit rather than implicit facet of language learning and stresses the role of the learner as an active agent in the learning process.

The reformulation of the interaction hypothesis by Long (1996) attempted to address issues raised by the above studies, as well as incorporate new insights about the importance of attention and noticing in learning that emerged from the work of Schmidt and Frota (1986), and Schmidt (1992). The restated Interaction Hypothesis is based on the following propositions:

1. That comprehensible input is a necessary but not sufficient condition for acquisition.
2. That learners need to *attend* to and *notice* or consciously perceive mismatches between input and their output, in order for input to become intake.
3. That negotiation for meaning during interaction promotes noticing.
4. That *negative feedback* gained during negotiation work may be facilitative of L2 development and necessary for particular L2 structures.

In this revised version of the interaction hypothesis, comprehensible input is one of several processes required for acquisition to occur. The additional processes of *attention* or the learner's focused consideration on the input received, and *noticing* or the learner's conscious capacity to perceive differences between their own output and the input received are introduced as key factors. Importantly, the role of interaction is extended and strengthened by giving *negotiation for meaning* a central role in promoting *noticing*. Equally importantly, the role of conversational adjustments in the form of *negative feedback* or information provided to the learner about what is not permissible in L2 is emphasised. Negative feedback contrasts with *positive evidence,* when learners are given correct models of the L2, often pre-emptively. *Negative feedback* can be explicit, as in overt correction, or implicit, as with negotiation moves such as *clarification requests*, *confirmation checks, comprehension checks* and *recasts*. Long (1996) emphasised the importance of these four types of *implicit negative feedback* in the learning process. In his view they enable the learner to continue to focus on meaning during an exchange, while at the same time drawing attention to form, thus providing an opportunity for learners to modify their own nontargetlike production. In Long's view, the strength of negotiated interaction lay in the way it linked the various processes involved:

> …I would like to suggest that *negotiation for meaning,* and especially negotiation work that triggers *interactional* adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways.
> (Long, 1996, p. 451)

The focus of the revised interaction hypothesis is still on input, generally through the contribution of the 'more competent interlocutor' or NS and the psycholinguistic

processes stimulated within the learner's head by the interactional adjustments produced by this interlocutor. While the revised interaction hypothesis does not give the emphasis to pushed output argued for by Swain (1985; 1994), there is a widening of focus and greater consideration given to the impact of interactional adjustments on the learner's output – in other words, the productive side of the learning process.

The effect of negative feedback, and especially implicit negative feedback, proposed by Long (1996) and of learner output by Swain (1985, 1995), was explored in experimental studies. A number of these studies (e.g., Iwashita, 2003; Long, Inagaki & Ortega, 1998; Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Mackey & Philp, 1998) produced promising evidence for these claims. The studies by Mackey, Mackey and Oliver, and Mackey and Philp investigated the impact of task-based interactional feedback on the development of question forms in English. Mackey and Philp compared the provision of interactionally modified input to learners and interactionally modified input plus intensive recasts. They found a positive effect for the latter treatment, with the benefits for the intensive recasts appearing to apply even if the recasts were not immediately incorporated. Mackey compared participation in tasks where interactionally modified input was provided, with tasks where learners received pre-modified input or where learners just observed. The study found that conversational interaction had the most positive result and observation the least positive, thus affirming the value of active participation by learners. Mackey and Oliver compared participation in a communicative task with the provision of implicit negative feedback in the form of negotiation and recasts to nontargetlike production, to participation without feedback and found that the group that participated in the former improved more than the group involved in the latter. In all three studies, the more effective treatment led to increased production of developmentally more advanced structures; among the adults, this was especially the case with the more advanced learners, thus suggesting a role for proficiency. However, a difference between adult and child learners emerged from the studies. Mackey and Oliver found that the child learners showed an immediate as well as delayed increase in the production of questions at a higher level, while the adult learners studied by Mackey demonstrated a delayed effect for development.

Of relevance to this research are the studies involving foreign language learners with limited proficiency conducted by Long, Inagaki and Ortega (1998) and Iwashita (2003). Long, Inagaki and Ortega examined the impact of recasts on the learning of object topicalisation and adverb placement in Spanish and locative and adjective ordering in Japanese. The study found a strong effect only for adverb placement in Spanish and some effect for adjective ordering in Japanese, results which the researchers suggest may have been influenced by learnability and processing issues related to the targeted. The methodological challenge of conducting this kind of research with learners of limited proficiency was also noted by the researchers.

Iwashita (2003) investigated the relative contribution of negative feedback and positive evidence in NS-learner task-based interaction on the acquisition of word order and particle use and the *te*-form verb structure in Japanese. Recasts, which were the most frequently occurring form of implicit negative feedback, were found to have a limited effect, with their facilitative impact on the development of the *te*-form verb structure being short-term only. Negotiation of meaning occurred relatively rarely, a finding which contrasts with those of Oliver (1995; 1998; 2000). Two findings of the study are of particular relevance to this research: (1) prevalence of feedback which involves positive evidence over negative feedback in the NS's interactional moves for all the targeted structures; and, (2) the beneficial finding for positive evidence as well as negative feedback (especially for the word order and particle use)[2]. As experience and anecdotal evidence suggest positive evidence is likely to feature strongly in the teacher-learner interaction that occurs in conventional LOTE classes, the findings from this study are important for learning in this context. Of relevance also for classroom LOTE learning, where proficiency levels tend to be low, was the possibility suggested by the researcher that there may be a threshold level for mastery for certain structures below which task-based interaction may not be particularly effective. This suggestion is consistent with the superior performance of the more advanced learners in the study by Mackey and Philp (1998) and echoes Pica's

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[2] It should be noted, however, that separating the effects of positive and negative input that occur in task-based interaction raised methodological issues for this study.

(1994) view that to make effective use of conversational interaction and modification, learners need to be beyond the beginning level.

The research into interaction described above has its theoretical basis in psychological and cognitive constructs of SLA that concentrate on the mental processes related to individual language development. However, as noted by van Lier (2000, p.247), the "importance of interaction for learning is an area of common ground for most perspectives on language learning" and has been a central concern of SLA research based on sociocultural theory. As it is applied in SLA, sociocultural theory "focuses primarily on human development and learning. Central to this approach is the fact that human activity is mediated by material artefacts and by symbolic sign systems, the most important of which is language" (Thorne, 2000, p. 225). This derives from Vygotsky's conviction that all higher mental abilities are enacted twice in individuals, first on the social or intermental plane, where the individual relies on another person or cultural artefact for learning and then, on an intramental plane, where individuals rely on their own psychological capacities (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf, 2000). Thus language learning (first and subsequent languages) proceeds from other-regulation (dependence on the support of another person or cultural artefact) to self-regulation (ability to act alone). According to sociocultural theorists, the zone of proximal development (ZPD), or the conceptual space where the learner moves from other-regulation to self-regulation, is where learning occurs.

As sociocultural theory posits that learning is always social in nature, in the first instance, interaction research based on this theory has concentrated on how the expert (teacher, parent, other adult) supports or scaffolds the learner's attempts at language mastery through use. While only the teacher was initially considered for the expert role in linguistic interaction, more recently, this role has been expanded to include fellow learners who are more competent speakers of the language, that is, learner-learner interaction. This focus on input has been accompanied by very fine-grained analysis of the learner's attempts at self-regulation through language use (microgenesis); in other words, a focus on learner output.

The tendency in the literature has been to emphasise the 'incommensurable' nature of cognitive interactionist and sociocultural theoretical orientations in SLA. Substantive philosophical and theoretical differences do exist, as Dunn and Lantolf (1998) have demonstrated in their discussion of those two influential metaphors for the language learning process, Krashen's notion of *comprehensible input/ i +1* and Vygotsky's ZPD. However, recent research based on the interaction hypothesis has concentrated its attention on processes of interaction and negotiation rather than information/cognitive processing and acknowledges "the importance of social and interactional factors in SLA" (Thorne, 2000, p.224). Ellis (1999) drew attention to the need for more qualitative interaction research that explores how learners gradually gain control of specific language forms and functions over time and points to the microgenetic method used by sociocultural researchers as holding promise in this regard. The concerns of these two theoretical orientations have resulted in useful cross-fertilisation, especially in classroom-based research. Issues raised by studies based on a particular theoretical orientation often provide insights or point to gaps in knowledge and understanding which inform subsequent research. The evolution of the work of Swain from the output hypothesis to dialogic construction through focus on collaborative dialogue (Swain, 2000; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002) includes the use of microgenetic analysis and is an example of how these two orientations have influenced each other and can combine to produce valuable insights about second language learning. Work on learner perceptions of interaction by Gass and Mackey (2000) and Mackey (2002) is also evidence of this cross-fertilisation. In other words, as Gass and Mackey (2006) observed, the Interaction Hypothesis has also evolved into an 'approach' or 'model' whose scope has widened beyond learner-internal (cognitive) factors to include investigation of components of interaction that have previously tended to be the province of research with a sociocultural theoretical perspective. These include the impact of social and learning context, as well as other individual differences such as motivation, learning strategies, working memory, language aptitude and cognitive style.

Interaction studies based on sociocultural theory, in contrast to the more quantitatively oriented studies based on cognitive interactionist theory, have tended to use qualitative

methodology and have been very sensitive to context. These studies have investigated aspects of interaction and negotiation pertinent to this research that are not addressed in other studies (e.g., scaffolding, learner agency, collaborative dialogue) and offer understandings and insights of value to this research study. Relevant studies based on sociocultural theory are, therefore, included in this review.

2.2.1 Summary

The theories discussed above, which attempt to explain the relationship between interaction and second language learning, all agree that linguistic input is essential for learning. The revised interaction hypothesis (Long, 1996) moves beyond Krashen's (1981; 1982) receptive model of language learning and gives primacy to interactional adjustments as facilitators of language learning. According to Long, the modified input or feedback provided to the learner through these conversational adjustments may also promote attention and noticing on the part of the learner, two other important factors in learning. Furthermore, Long considers negative feedback or feedback which draws attention to the learner when an utterance is not acceptable in L2 to be more effective than positive evidence or pre-emptive L2 models. Implicit negative feedback (negotiation moves, recasts) which has the capacity to convey information about linguistic form, as well as address communication breakdown, was identified by Long as having the greatest potential for facilitating learning. The output hypothesis (Swain, 1985; 1995), proposes that the provision of comprehensible input is not sufficient for learning and that learners also need to produce output where they are pushed to solve linguistic problems in order to communicate. Recent empirical research has shown that the provision of interactional adjustments to learners is more likely to produce evidence of learning than occurs when just observing interaction or through interaction without interactional adjustments. Sociocultural approaches to SLA emphasise the importance of social and contextual factors in learning. Sociocultural theory proposes that learning occurs through social interaction. Learners initially depend on other-regulation or support from an adult or more competent language user. With expert support or scaffolding they progress through the ZPD to mastery or self-regulation.

2.3 Classroom interaction

The focus of much of the theoretical work on interaction is conversational interaction or that interaction that is meaning-focused and carried out to repair or prevent communication breakdowns and to facilitate the exchange of information. However, the interaction that occurs in second language classes, as in all classes, is of a particular nature and has a range of functions including formal instruction, whole class and task management and development of group cohesion. Classroom interaction, therefore, encompasses everything that happens in the classroom that involves communication and is defined broadly to refer to include "…not only to those exchanges involving authentic communication but to every oral exchange that occurs in the classroom, including those that arise in the course of formal drilling" (Ellis, 1990, p.12).

Interaction in second language classes, as in other classes, can be either between the teacher and the learners, either collectively or individually, and/or between learners themselves. Traditionally, the focus of interaction was predominantly on that which occurred between the teacher and learners. This form of interaction is usually initiated and controlled by the teacher. With the introduction of the communicative approach to language teaching in the late1970s, interaction between learners, as well as between the teacher and learners, became an important feature of second language pedagogy. Interaction research studies that have been classroom-based or have focused on aspects of classroom language learning have investigated the features and impact of both teacher-student and student-student interaction, with the latter receiving considerable research attention in the past 15 years. However, van Lier (1996) has pointed out that teacher-student interaction presents different opportunities for negotiation as compared to learner-learner interaction and each type needs to be evaluated within its particular context. For this reason, as well as for convenience, studies relevant to this research related to teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction are discussed separately. It is acknowledged, however, that these two dimensions of interaction are related, insofar as they are both, to an extent, controlled by the teacher and can and do co-occur in the classroom context.

2.3.1 Teacher-learner interaction

Classroom teacher-learner discourse is institutional in nature. It is characterised by unequal power relationships, as the teacher controls the topic and general discourse by directing turn taking and through the use of display questions, among other things. A well documented feature of interaction in all classrooms is the three part 'Initiation – Response - Feedback' (IRF) pattern (Hall, 1998). This pattern involves the teacher initiating the exchange, the learner responding and the teacher providing feedback, often evaluative in nature. The emphasis in second language pedagogy since the introduction of the communicative approach has been on conversational forms of interaction that focus on meaning and that therefore break away from the IRF pattern. Despite this, Hall and Walsh (2002, p.189) in a review of recent developments in teacher-student interaction and language learning reported that "a few recent research studies have confirmed the ubiquity of the IRE[3] pattern of interaction in foreign and second language classrooms."

In their discussion of the use of the IRF in language classes, Hall and Walsh (2002) documented how its three part structure restricts language learning by providing only a single and often very limited[4] opportunity for output by the learner. However, Hall and Walsh, like van Lier (1996), made a case for re-evaluation of the IRF. They pointed to research by Wells (1993) which demonstrated that it was the nature of the feedback provided by the teacher in the third turn of the IRF which constrained or provided opportunities for further interaction. Teacher feedback tended to be evaluative and therefore signalled a closing of the exchange. Instead, the teacher could ask students to extend their thinking, to justify or clarify their ideas or make links with their own experience. This less restricted form of the IRF provided learners with more opportunities for negotiation and potentially, therefore, learning.

Ohta (2001), discussing classroom interaction research involving adult beginning learners of Japanese, also drew attention to the expressive possibilities of the third turn of the IRF.

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[3] What Hall and Walsh (2002) refer to as the Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) pattern of interaction is also commonly referred to as Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF). The latter nomenclature is used in this study.
[4] Especially if the initiating exchange is a closed and/or display question.

She noted that, in addition to evaluation, it could be used by the teacher as an expression of interest or to align assessment. Ohta (2001, p.189) argued that the IRF's predictability, frequent occurrence and teacher dominance of the third turn provides potential benefits for beginning learners by creating an environment where learners are "repeatedly exposed to listener responses in meaningful contexts", thus allowing them to predict where the listener's response may occur.

Before discussing several studies of teacher-student interaction which address issues related to classroom discourse structure, a two-part study of interaction in conventional LOTE classes in Australia by McKay (1994) is examined. The key focus of the study was an attempt to evaluate "the relative role of meaning-based interaction and form-focused teaching in the development of communicative competence" (McKay, 1994, p.8). The first part consisted of a process-oriented observational study which analysed interaction in four Year 9 French classes in order to answer the question, "How communicative are we?" The second part, a process-product study, analysed interaction in two of the four classes in the following year (Year 10) and tested students' language learning outcomes in order to answer the question, "How communicative should we be?"

McKay (1994) used the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) observation scheme to analyse teacher-student interaction and, therefore, the results are framed in its terms. Extrapolating from the high degree of unpredictability that is a feature of normal interaction, teacher 'communicativeness' was judged in terms of the proportion of informational or referential requests provided to students. About eighty per cent of teachers' information-giving turns in each of the classes were found to be unpredictable. However, the percentage of these turns that involved genuine requests for information, that is non-display questions, varied enormously across the four classes, from 0%-75%. Student 'communicativeness' was also judged by the percentage of turns that included unpredictable information (20%-70%) and by student participation in terms of length turns. Sustained student turns in French were very low, with most being one word, a clause or a sentence consisting of one main clause. These results suggest that teacher-

student interaction, in several of the classes at least, would have been based on the classic IRF pattern.

The student performance data from the second part of the study revealed that the students in the class where there was a greater amount of focus-on-form teaching (Class 1), scored significantly higher in the oral interview than those from the class that was more communicative or meaning-focused (Class 4). McKay (1994) hypothesised that one of the reasons for the superior performance of students from Class 1 in this area could be that they had more opportunities to produce longer turns and receive feedback, and their language benefited from being " 'pushed' towards participating in these longer and unrestricted speaking turns" (p.30). In other words, the less restricted IRF discourse structure described by Hall and Walsh (2002) may have been used more frequently than the traditional IRF discourse structure in Class 1.

McKay (1994) also found that teacher use of L2 varied between 40%-70% in the various instructional contexts across the classes observed. The extent of teacher use of L2 in LOTE classes, in particular, has implications for interaction and learning, and is discussed separately in this literature review.

Three studies (Hall, 1998; Musumeci, 1996; Walsh, 2002) that examine how teacher verbal and/or other behaviours influence the nature and pattern of teacher-student interaction are now discussed. Hall analysed the interaction between a teacher and four students in a high school Spanish class in the USA. This interaction occurred around what the classroom teacher called 'practising speaking', an activity undertaken for the purpose of developing the student's conversational abilities in the language. Topics included self-introductions and discussion of school and community activities taking place during the day or week. Analysis of the turn-taking showed that exchanges between the teacher and all four students followed the typical three part IRF pattern. Significantly, however, there was a marked difference in the number of cooperative responses the teacher directed to each of the students, with the student having the highest percentage of turns paradoxically receiving the lowest level of teacher response and the student with lowest percentage of

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turns receiving the highest level of teacher response. Hall argued that it was not primarily the IRF pattern that constrained or facilitated student learning. More crucial were the quantitative and qualitative differences in the opportunities for participation that the teacher afforded each of the students. In Hall's view, these had the greatest potential for creating different developmental paths for each of the students in terms of their interactional skills in Spanish.

The effect of the teacher's responses to a learner's utterances on participation in interaction was also investigated by Walsh (2002). This study examined the discourse of eight EFL teachers conducting a teacher-fronted activity including teacher-learner interaction. Walsh found teachers' choice of language and their capacity to control their language use to be crucial to facilitating or hindering learner participation in face-to-face exchanges. Teacher verbal behaviour that reduced teacher dominance of interaction and increased the level of learner participation included: an open and direct approach to error correction; appropriate use of real-life conversational language when giving feedback; allowing extended wait-time for learner responses; and, scaffolding, by providing needed language to pre-empt communication breakdowns or by offering communication strategies to maintain and extend learner turns. In contrast, teacher verbal behaviour which appeared to impede learner language use were: latching or completing a learner's turn, usually done in order maintain the flow of the discourse; echoing or repeating all or part of what the learner has said, which follows the initiation, response, feedback (IRF) pattern of interaction; and, interruptions by the teacher which caused a communication breakdown by making the learner loose the thread of his/her utterance.

On the basis of his findings, Walsh (2002, p. 14) argued that the amount of teacher talking time was not so much the issue, but rather "the **appropriacy** of language used in relation to 'the context of the moment' and the task in hand." He also emphasised the need for teachers to be more aware of their language use in classroom interaction and recommended audio or video recording interaction with learners for later examination and reflection.

Teacher control and domination of the discourse, very limited student participation in interactive exchanges and teacher verbal behaviour that made negotiation by students unnecessary, were the findings of a study of teacher-student interaction conducted by Musumeci (1996). The study sought to determine the extent to which negotiation between the NS teachers and the NNS learners took place and data for the study were collected in three content-based, university-level classes of Italian. Musumeci found that the teachers controlled the classroom discourse in several ways. They spoke for a majority of the time (between 66%-72%). In addition, teachers initiated most of the interaction with students by asking a question, which was usually a request for information and then chose who should respond. Initiation of verbal exchanges varied between the three teachers, being done 66%, 85% and 92% of the time. The majority of the questions asked by teachers were content-based display questions. Students, on the other hand, asked referential questions, mainly related to lexical items. Significantly, students almost always initiated their questions during small-group rather than whole-class activities.

In terms of negotiation between teacher and learners, Musumeci (1996) found that all the teachers modified their output in response to signals of non-comprehension on the part of the students, regardless of whether they were interacting with the whole class, small groups or individuals. However, they usually did not ask students to modify their speech through clarification requests or by asking them to reformulate or expand on what they had said. Teachers tended to maintain the flow of the discourse by filling the gaps – they repeated correct responses, reworded incomplete or inexact replies by supplying correct forms or provided extended interpretations of student utterances. Clarification requests on the part of students were rare (despite being taught the appropriate linguistic phrases for this in L2) and occurred almost always in small group contexts. In short, interaction in these classes was characterised by a notable lack of linguistic negotiation by students. Interviews conducted with teachers and students as part of the study pointed to their expectations about the behaviour appropriate in language classrooms as important factors influencing the nature of this interaction.

These three descriptive studies sought to understand the impact of teacher discourse on student participation. They involved LOTE and EFL learners of different ages, high school and university classes, content-based and conventional language programs. Despite these differences, all three identified teacher domination of the interaction as in some way problematic and each identified teacher verbal behaviours that tended to further reduce the already limited opportunities for student participation provided by the classroom context.

Of the three studies discussed above, only that by Musumeci (1996) focused on the kinds of input and interactional features considered by Long (1983; 1985; 1996) as being facilitative of language learning. The next group of studies to be examined reflect this theoretical orientation more directly.

A study by Pica and Doughty (1985) involving adult ESL learners compared teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction. Data for the teacher-learner interaction were collected from a whole class discussion of a decision-making task about family planning in the future and data for the student-student interaction came from a group discussion about who should be chosen for a heart transplant from six potential recipients. The study found that teacher-student interaction generated less input for students than student-student interaction, but that the input provided was more grammatical. The teacher produced most of the grammatical input. Students in the teacher-directed context took less turns and produced less language. However, they used more of the conversational adjustments that help make input more comprehensible such as clarification requests and confirmation and comprehension checks. The amount of self and other-repetition was relatively high for both activities, with self-repetition clearly higher in the teacher-directed activity. Pica and Doughty (1985, p. 131) argued that these results reflect classroom pressures to participate in and complete tasks and to adhere to topics rather than negotiate for meaning and suggest that "more stringent repetition categories will have to be developed in order to capture this distinction between classroom negotiated moves and the negotiated interaction which more closely parallels that which occurs outside the classroom."

Adult and child ESL learners were included in a study by Oliver (2000) that investigated the use of negotiation and implicit negative feedback in the form of recasts. The data were in two contexts. In classrooms, teachers interacted with intact classes for an informal conversation and during a structured picture talk lesson. The second context involved pair work between NS-NNS [5] dyads performing a one way and a two way task. In contrast to Pica and Doughty (1985), Oliver found that learners in both contexts (teacher-directed and NS-NNS) frequently received negative feedback. Oliver's study was also able to demonstrate that learners in both contexts used the feedback provided in their immediate language production, if given the opportunity to do so, and, if appropriate. Significant differences were observed between adult and children learners in the teacher-directed lessons, in terms of learners' initial turns and teachers' responses. Children were more likely to produce correct initial utterances than adults, and adults more likely to offer nontargetlike language. Teachers were more likely to respond to adults by using negotiation strategies but offered recasts in similar proportions to both groups. The opportunity to use the feedback differed in the two contexts. Teacher-directed activities offered notably less opportunity to use feedback than pair work activities. However, learners carrying out pair work activities were more likely to ignore negative feedback than learners in teacher-directed activities, where they tended to respond to such feedback. Oliver suggests the differences found for adult and child learners may reflect the inherent characteristics of the two groups, the greater degree of control teachers have in their interaction with children, and, the fact that they may have higher expectations for adults.

Interaction between teachers and learners in the classroom can occur in a number of contexts. The impact of different instructional contexts on teacher-student interaction was investigated by Oliver and Mackey (2003). Their study set out to identify whether distinct interactional contexts existed and the kind of negative feedback that occurred in each context. The study collected data on teacher-learner interaction from five teachers

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[5] Interaction between NS-NNS dyads composed of child and adult peers has similarities to teacher-learner interaction in that the NS, like the teacher, is the more expert speaker of the language. However, in other respects the relationship between the two interlocutors, unlike that of teacher and learner, is likely to be that of equals.

working in primary school ESL intensive centre classes in Australia, where the learners ranged from 6-12 years in age. Each teacher was videotaped for a full teaching day (4.5 hours). Analysis of the data established four distinct interactional contexts: content; management, communication; and explicit language focus. In content exchanges, the teacher imparted knowledge or drew out information from the students about a curriculum, content or skill area. Management exchanges concentrated on classroom management issues, while communication exchanges involved the use of L2 to discuss topics of common interest, share news, debate events or issues. with the teacher using open-ended questions. In exchanges with an explicit language focus, the teacher concentrated on instruction related to formal aspects of the language.

Oliver and Mackey (2003) found differences for each of the contexts for all the measures they examined. These measures were: the opportunity for the teacher to give negative feedback and the extent to which they provided it; the type of feedback given; the opportunity given to learners to use teacher feedback; and, the extent to which learners modified their output in response to the feedback. The communication context furnished the greatest number of opportunities for teachers to provide negative feedback, as a statistically significant 51% production by learners in this context was nontargetlike, almost twice as much as in the other three contexts. However, teacher feedback did not occur most often in this context, as it was given only 54% of the time. Teachers provided most feedback in the explicit language-focused context, where it occurred in 85% of instances. Teacher feedback was provided in 61% of instances in the content context and in 35% of instances in the management context.

The most prevalent type of feedback given in all four contexts was recasts, which comprised 78% and 77% of feedback in the content and management contexts respectively, and 63% and 47% in the communication and explicit language-focused contexts respectively. Negotiation for meaning was a significant source of feedback in the communication context (34%), but occurred considerably less often in the other three, with an almost equal amount supplied in management (18%) and content (17%), and in the explicit language-focused context (12%). Implicit negative feedback in the form of

recasts or negotiation for meaning accounted for 95% or more of feedback in the content, management and communication contexts, making explicit forms of feedback a rare occurrence in these contexts. In contrast, 41% of feedback in the explicit language-focused context was explicit negative feedback.

Opportunities for learners to use teacher feedback occurred most often in the explicit language-focused context (76% of the time) and resulted in learners modifying their output in 85% of these instances. As the researchers noted teachers may have communicated their expectations that learners modify their output in response to feedback very clearly and influenced the extent to which that occurred. The opportunities for learners to use teacher feedback were also notable in the communication context (63%) and resulted in modified output 38% of the time. In the content context, learners had opportunities to use the teacher feedback 32% of the time and almost always modified their output (27% of the time). Learners had the least opportunities to use teachers' feedback in the management context (14% of the time) and produced no modified output as part of interactional exchanges in that context. Again, as the authors note, this may reflect teachers' conceptions of the purposes of interaction in this context. It may also reflect that students expect to have to follow commands and instructions, rather than to question or contest them.

The Oliver and Mackey (2003) study clarifies the more generalised (and sometimes rather negative) findings about teacher-student interaction of the studies reviewed thus far. The study defines and establishes the four main contexts for interaction in ESL classrooms. It demonstrates that the four contexts offer teachers different levels of opportunity to interact with students and suggests that the extent to which teachers give feedback seems to be influenced by the purpose of the interactional context. It also shows that different contexts elicit different amounts and types of feedback from teachers. Hence in the communication context, the main function of which is exchange of information, students produce the greatest amount of nontargetlike language. However, teachers provide feedback only a little or over half of the time and give overwhelmingly implicit negative feedback, especially recasts, feedback types which are least intrusive of the communication flow. In

contrast, in the explicit language-focused context, which has a more didactic purpose, teachers have fewer opportunities to provide feedback but give it 85% of the time and use almost as much explicit as implicit negative feedback. The study also shows that the opportunities for students to use teacher feedback vary within these contexts, with the explicit language-focused context providing the greatest opportunity and the management context providing the least opportunity. The study demonstrates that students are most likely to modify their output in response to teacher feedback received in the explicit language-focused context and do not use teacher feedback given in the management context at all.

This study is of particular relevance to the present research for several reasons. Its database comes from actual lessons conducted in school ESL classes. Equally importantly, it provides evidence about the nature and quality of teacher-student interaction in the explicit language-focused context and challenges the perception that interaction in this context is not particularly beneficial to learners. The fact that teachers give the greatest amount of feedback (of both the implicit and explicit negative kind) in the explicit language-focused context and that most of this feedback is actually used by learners reaffirms its role in language learning. The findings for this and the management context are particularly relevant for conventional LOTE classes, as anecdotal evidence suggests much teacher-learner interaction occurs in these two contexts.

Negotiation that occurs through conversational interaction is often meaning-focused. It can also have a didactic function, that is, "the provision of corrective feedback that encourages self-repair involving accuracy and precision and not just comprehensibility" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 42). Lyster and Ranta (1997) called this didactic function *negotiation of form*. Negotiation of form occurs in many classroom contexts. Four studies which demonstrate the contribution to language learning of this kind of negotiation, including that by Lyster and Ranta (1997), are now reviewed.

A quasi-experimental study conducted by Spada and Lightbown (1993) with primary school ESL learners set out to discover the contribution of a specially designed program of

form-focused instruction and corrective feedback to the development of question form. The learners in two experimental classes received the program while the control class did not. The study found that both form-focused instruction and corrective feedback contributed positively to this aspect of language development. Of particular interest, however, was the unexpected outcome that the students from the control class performed as well as those from the experimental classes. Analysis of classroom data from the control class pointed to the characteristics of teacher-student interaction as the reason for the class' unexpectedly high performance. The teacher in the control class asked more questions and asked spontaneous questions more frequently than the teachers in the experimental class. In terms of corrective feedback, the control class teacher employed implicit feedback most frequently of the three and used various types of explicit feedback, but not the metalinguistic feedback and repetition of students' errors used by the other teachers. Although students in the control class asked fewer questions than those in the experimental classes, they had the highest level of accuracy. Spada and Lightbown hypothesised that it was the consistent and extended context-embedded nature of focus on form instruction that the comparison group received that accounted for this group's superior performance.

How teacher-learner interaction can either facilitate or discourage negotiation of form was investigated by a study of French and Italian first year foreign language university classes carried out by Antón (1999). Each of the classes studied was engaged in traditional classroom activities of grammar explanation, exercise correction/practice of structures and oral practice. Drawing on sociocultural theory and, in particular, how the novice can be helped by scaffolding from the expert or teacher, Antón argued that the learner-centredness implies not only the provision of more pair or group activities, but a mode of interaction between teacher and learner that is also learner-centred.

Antón's analysis of interaction from the two classes demonstrated the discursive devices available to teachers to scaffold learners in the completion of tasks. These devices were used by the teacher of French in ways that made her interaction with students learner-centred by encouraging and seeking students' active involvement. The devices included:

raising learners' consciousness about grammatical forms through the use of open-ended questions; encouraging learners to reflect on aspects of grammar that may be posing difficulties and helping them resolve the difficulties themselves; encouraging group as well as individual problem solving; providing corrective feedback that fosters self-repair by using verbal and non-verbal cues; structuring tasks in ways that give the learner metacognitive support; being flexible about turn-taking by encouraging individual and group contributions in addition to the response of particular individuals to whom a question has been directed; signalling that other classroom norms can be negotiated; and, encouraging learners to discover and use a range of learning strategies. The teacher of Italian, in contrast, used a deductive approach to the grammar explanation and related activities that provided few opportunities for negotiation and scaffolding and, therefore, according to Antón, reduced the incentive for learner engagement in these activities.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) examined teacher-learner interaction that focused on negotiation of form in French immersion classes. The observational study investigated the type of corrective feedback teachers gave learners and the effect of this feedback in terms of learner uptake. Lyster and Ranta found that six different types of corrective feedback were used by the teachers in the four classes from which they collected data: recasts; explicit correction; clarification requests; metalinguistic feedback; elicitation; and, repetition. Recasts accounted for 55% of all feedback techniques and were the most frequently used form of feedback by all teachers. Elicitations accounted for 14% of feedback provided by teachers, followed by clarification requests (11%), metalinguistic feedback (8%), explicit correction (7%) and repetition (5%).

Despite teachers' extensive use of recasts, Lyster and Ranta (1997) found only 18% led to repairs, indicating a low level of uptake. All of the other less frequently used forms of feedback had a much high percentage of repairs, especially those generated by students. Elicitations accounted for 46% of repairs, metalinguistic feedback 45%, clarification requests 27%, explicit correction 36% and repetition 31%. Forty three percent of repairs in response to elicitations were student generated, while the percentage for metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests and repetition was 26%, 20% and 11% respectively.

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Lyster and Ranta argued that recasts were the least effective of the feedback technique used and suggested two reasons for this. First, the learner does not need to participate actively and try to reformulate erroneous utterances with help from the teacher. Second, the similarity of recasts to non-corrective repetition and their co-occurrence with expressions of reinforcement led to ambiguity about their purpose (Lyster, 1998).

A study by Lochtman (2002) of how oral corrective feedback affects interaction in foreign language classes[6] found that teachers in these classes used similar feedback techniques to those used by the teachers studied by Lyster and Ranta (1997). Thus, the techniques most frequently used by the foreign language teachers consisted of recasts (30.5%), elicitations (30.2%) and metalinguistic feedback (23.9%). Each technique resulted in repair 35%, 46.8% and 47% of the time respectively. In contrast to the teachers studied by Lyster and Ranta, the foreign language teachers made very minimal use of clarification requests (1.8%). Lochtman also found that the frequency of no learner uptake following recasts (52.5%) and explicit correction (52%) was very high in comparison to metalinguistic feedback (2%) and elicitations (2%). However, while 51% of learner repair in response to metalinguistic feedback and elicitations required further repair, the percentage was much lower for recasts (12.5%) and explicit corrections (22%). Lochtman suggested that this may be due to the greater effectiveness of recasts and explicit correction in helping learners to 'notice the gap' between their erroneous utterances and the target language.

The insistence by Lyster and Ranta (1997) on the importance of active participation by the learner is consistent with the principles of the Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985; 1995; 1998). However, the claims by Lyster and Ranta about the lack of effectiveness of recasts are at odds with those of a number of experimental studies reviewed in the first section of this chapter (Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Oliver, 2000)[7]. Moreover, as Lochtman points out, a number of studies have suggested a delayed,

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[6] The study was conducted in three classes of German and the teaching approach in these classes concentrated on the analysis of language rather than being meaning-focused.
[7] However, Iwashita (2003) found that recasts were only facilitative in the short-term development of the Japanese verb structure that her study focused on.

rather than immediate effect for implicit negative feedback such as recasts (Loewen &
Philp, 2006; Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Ohta, 2000).

The recent study by Loewen and Philp (2006)[8] drew attention to the complexity of recasts
and shed considerable light on the debate surrounding them. Importantly, the study
revealed that recasts were beneficial at least 50% of the time as measured by post-tests and
identified particular characteristics associated with successful uptake (stress, declarative
intonation, one change, multiple feedback) and, other characteristics with accuracy in
post-tests (interrogative intonation, shortened length, one change). The study concluded
that recasts vary in their implicitness, that their ambiguity is considerably reduced by the
phrasal, prosodic and discoursal cues that teachers provide and that their effectiveness is
likely to be affected by these cues and by their closeness to the learner's original
utterance.

A classroom-based study by Doughty and Varela (1998) also challenges the findings of
Lyster and Ranta (1997) regarding the effectiveness of recasts. The study, which used a
pretest-posttest control group design, was conducted with high school ESL science
classes. In the study, the treatment group received focus-on-form instruction designed to
stimulate spontaneous and planned use of all aspects of past time reference, both orally
and in writing, in addition to science instruction. While working on the instructional tasks
the treatment group received frequent corrective recasting[9] which targeted only the forms
of the past tense, in addition to feedback about science content. The control group
received only instruction and feedback about science content. The results showed that the
treatment group made gains not evident in the control group; they made more attempts at
using the past tense and their accuracy in its use improved, especially in their oral reports,
where improvements shown in the immediate post-test were maintained in the delayed
post-test. In terms of teacher-learner interaction, this study demonstrated that provision of

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[8] This study collected data from 12 adult ESL classes.
[9] 'Corrective recasts' as used by Doughty and Varela (1998) differ from 'normal' recasts in that they involve
a two step procedure where the teacher firstly draws attention to student's problem utterance (oral or
written), then provides the correct form by means of a recast. 'Normal recasts' do not include the first step.

frequent, planned, narrowly focused focus-on-form feedback in the form of recasts is both effective and feasible in content-based science ESL classes.

Nicholas, Lightbown and Spada (2001) point out the many differences between research studies on recasts, including the different operational definitions of recasts, and stress the importance of keeping these differences in mind when interpreting and comparing their results. The studies by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and by Doughty and Varela (1998) have different research designs and conceptualise recasts differently, factors which may, in part, account for the different findings regarding their effectiveness. These two studies reflect the two different approaches to meaning-based focus-on-form (FonF) proposed by Ellis (2001): planned and intensively targeted feedback on pre-selected linguistic items as in the study by Doughty and Varela; and incidental and extensive feedback that addresses a range of linguistic items as in the study by Lyster and Ranta. It may be that the planned and very intensively targeted corrective recasts used by Doughty and Varela have fewer of the ambiguous characteristics identified by Lyster (1998).

The studies related to teacher-learner interaction reviewed above cover a time span of about twenty years, investigate this interaction from somewhat different theoretical perspectives, are based on different research designs and draw their data from child and adult ESL and LOTE classroom contexts. The studies involve ESL and LOTE child and adult learners in almost equal measure. However, only three of the studies were carried out in conventional LOTE classes in primary or secondary schools.

2.3.1.1 Summary
The key features of the picture of teacher-learner interaction that emerges from these studies are summarised below:
- the IRF pattern remains the dominant discourse structure in many second language classrooms (Hall & Walsh, 2002; Ohta, 2001; van Lier, 1996);
- some teachers use a more open-ended version of the IRF pattern which supports and promotes interaction more effectively than the classic IRF pattern (Hall & Walsh, 2002; Ohta, 2001; van Lier, 1996);

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- the nature of teacher verbal behaviour in teacher-learner interaction may be as important as the IRF pattern in limiting or providing opportunities for interaction and learner language use (Hall, 1998; Musumeci, 1996: Walsh, 2002);

- teachers' use of a range discursive devices can promote learners' negotiation of form in traditional foreign language classroom activities such as exercise correction and oral practice (Antón, 1999);

- an early study by Pica and Doughty (1985) found that teacher-learner interaction provided less but more grammatical input to learners than learner-learner interaction; however, a more recent study by Oliver (2000) suggests that teacher-learner interaction provides similar amounts of feedback as learner-learner interaction;

- teachers are more likely to respond to adults than children by using negotiation strategies but offer recasts in similar proportions to both groups and learners use the feedback provided to them by teachers in their immediate language production, if given the opportunity to do so, and, if appropriate (Oliver, 2000);

- teacher-learner interaction provides fewer opportunities to incorporate feedback than student-student interaction; (Musumeci, 1996; Oliver, 2000; Pica & Doughty, 1985);

- instructional contexts influence the opportunities for teachers to provide feedback to students, the extent to which they provide feedback and students use of feedback, with the communication context providing most opportunities, but the explicit language-focused context producing the greatest amount of teacher feedback and highest level of student use of feedback (Oliver & Mackey, 2003);

- recasts are the most frequently used form of negative or corrective feedback in teacher-student interaction, in all instructional contexts, and in ESL and LOTE immersion classes; there is debate about their effectiveness vis-à-vis other forms of feedback, but research evidence increasingly supports claims for their contribution to learning (Doughty & Varela, 1998; Lochtman, 2002; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Oliver & Mackey, 2003; Spada & Lightbown, 1993);

- interaction can have a didactic as well as meaning-focused function (often referred to as *negotiation of form*) and this function is often strongly emphasised in teacher-

student interaction (Doughty & Varela, 1998; Lochtman, 2002; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Oliver & Mackey, 2003; Spada & Lightbown, 1993); and,

- in conventional LOTE classes conducted secondary schools a substantial amount of interaction occurs in L1 as well as L2 (McKay, 1994).

Important themes in all these studies are the quality as well as the quantity of the input provided to students in teacher-directed interaction and the opportunity this interaction gives learners to modify their output by incorporating feedback they have received. A feature of teacher-learner interaction described in McKay's (1994) study of four secondary French classes was the teachers' use of L1 as well as L2 in their interaction with learners. Teachers' language choices have significant implications for the quality of input available to learners as well as the nature and pattern of interaction that result. Teachers' language choices are especially important in LOTE classes, where learners may have little or limited outside access to the L2. However, they are also a matter for concern and debate in EFL/ESL classroom learning (Carless, 2004; Cook, 2001; Macaro, 1995). These language choices and their implications for interaction are discussed in the next section.

2.3.2 Teachers' language choices

Over the past twenty years research studies related to teachers' language choices have been concerned with three main issues. One of these issues is the amount of L2 (and by implication L1) used by teachers. More recent research has begun to concentrate on how choice of L2 or L1 relates to particular contexts and to teaching and learning functions. There is also renewed debate about the role of L1 in L2 learning. The following discussion of research studies will examine these issues and concentrate, in particular, on studies from LOTE classroom teaching contexts.

Investigation of teachers' use of L1 and L2 in school and university foreign language instruction across a number of continents has indicated overall rather low levels of L2 use (Calman & Daniel, 1998; Crawford, 2002; Duff & Polio, 1990; Franklin, 1990; Macaro, 1997; Mitchell, 1988; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). A large scale survey carried out in the United States by the Centre for Applied Linguistics in 1997 found that just over 20% of

secondary teachers reported using L2 most of the time i.e., 75%-100% of the time (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). A similarly large scale survey of primary and secondary school LOTE teachers in Queensland carried out by Crawford (2002) provides data for Australian schools which suggest that use of L2 by teachers increases between primary and senior secondary school. The study found that only 18% of primary school teachers (Years 6-7) and 23% of lower secondary school teachers (Years 9-10) reported using L2 60%-80% of the time in their weekly teaching cycle. However, 50% of senior secondary school teachers (Years 11-12) reported using L2 60%-80% of the time in their weekly teaching cycle. The increased levels of L2 use reported by teachers at senior secondary level may reflect factors such as smaller class size, greater time allocation, more motivated students and, therefore, less management problems, and possibly, higher levels of teacher proficiency.

Classroom observation studies of teachers' language choices, however, point to considerable variation among individual teachers. Use of L2 by five secondary teachers of French studied by Mitchell and Martin (1997) ranged from between almost 37% to100% of the time. Teaching experience seems to have been an influencing factor, with L2 use for the three experienced teachers ranging from 91% - 100% and for the two inexperienced teachers between 37% - 60%. Research on language use by teachers of core French programs in Canadian secondary schools found that L2 use varied between 9%-89% for a group of four teachers observed over an eight week period and between 24%-72% for another group studied for a similar period of time (Turnbull, 2001).

A similarly large variation in amount of L2 use was found among thirteen university language teachers of Asian, European and Slavonic languages investigated by Duff and Polio (1990). Teachers in this study used L2 between 10%-100% of the time in the two lessons observed, even though they were all native speakers. However, the teachers fell into two distinct groups, with a sub-group of six operating mainly in L2 and averaging L2 use between 91%-100% of the time over two lessons.

A follow-up study by Polio and Duff (1994) further analysed the classroom discourse of six of the thirteen teachers with midrange L1 from the 1990 database, in order to relate language choice to context and pedagogic functions. Although the researchers found it difficult to draw generalizations across the six teachers and to predict the purposes for which they would use L1, they identified three main common purposes for the teachers' L1 discourse and related sub-purposes for the first two:

1. Function of an item/utterance(s) produced
    a) for administrative vocabulary items
    b) for grammar instruction
    c) for classroom management
    d) to index a stance of empathy/solidarity
    e) for English practice by the teacher with tutoring from the students
2. Difficulty of the language used
    a) to provide translations for unknown TL vocabulary
    b) to remedy students' apparent lack of comprehension
3. Interactive effect involving students' use of English.

(Polio & Duff, 1994, p. 317)

Teacher interviews revealed a range of reasons for use of L1, including a desire to save time in classroom management, a reluctance to teach grammar in the L2, especially if perceived differences between L1 and L2 were great, and a desire to connect empathetically with learners. Overall, the researchers felt that teachers were inclined to ignore negotiated interaction in L2, processes that research has suggested are facilitative of acquisition. Additionally, the researchers identified a "pervasive tendency in FL classes for English to be the vehicle of meaningful communication (and supplementary metalinguistic information), with the TL reserved for more mechanical, grammatical drills" (Polio & Duff, 1994, p.322). Attention was also drawn to teachers' apparent lack of awareness about "how, when and the extent to which they use English in the classroom" (Polio & Duff, 1994, p.320) and its possible negative consequences for pedagogy.

In contrast to the study by Duff and Polio (1990), where the teachers involved taught a number of very different languages, Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) found high levels of L2 use (82%-100%) among the university teachers of French they studied. Analysis of teachers' classroom discourse found that teachers used L1 for purposes similar to those identified by Polio and Duff (1994). Furthermore, the study suggested that activity type may influence the amount of L1 use by teachers, with activities involving the teaching of grammar tending to be associated with more L1 use. Interestingly, Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie identified two strategies involving use of L1 which may facilitate acquisition: the translation of L2 words into L1; and, making contrasts between L1 and L2 forms. The authors hypothesised that these code-switching strategies may promote focus on form during interaction in L2, and thus assist in the development of conscious knowledge of the L2 system.

A study by Macaro (2001) of six LOTE student teachers completing their practicum in secondary schools also discovered a low level of L1 use (4.8%-6.9%). A relevant aspect of this study was its exploration of the influence of research and professional literature covered as part of their course on the student teachers' decision-making regarding their language choices. The study found that research and professional literature and personal beliefs appeared to have little influence on this decision-making. Interestingly, the study also found that teacher levels of L1 use did not seem to affect the quantity of L1 or L2 used by students.

Exploration of the functions for which teachers used L1 or L2 initiated by Polio and Duff (1994) was continued in a study by Kim and Elder (2005). The study analysed the language choices made by seven LOTE teachers in New Zealand secondary schools who were native-speakers of the language they taught (Japanese, Korean, German or French). The study sought to better understand the relationship between choice of language and the pedagogic function for which L1 or L2 was used. It employed multiple-category coding system known as the 'Functional Language Alternation Analysis of Teacher Talk' (FLAAT) to explore and establish this relationship.

As with other studies, Kim and Elder (2005) found significant variation in the use of L2 by individual teachers. This ranged from 23%-88%, with only three of the seven teachers using L2 more than 50% of the time and two teachers using it for about a quarter of the time only. Fourteen pedagogic functions involving language choice were identified. Significantly, the researchers found that the teachers generally used L1 more often than L2 for a number of the key pedagogic functions identified and that there was no systematic relationship between the language teachers used and the pedagogic functions for which they used it. Three functions were used by four or more of the seven teachers: 'Model/Correct/Scaffold'(where the teacher helps students learn either a grammatical structure or pronunciation in L2); 'Accept'(the teacher's response of 'yes', 'no', 'good', 'fine' to a student's utterance and repetition of a student's reply); and, "Directive' (a command in its unmarked form). The 'Model/Correct/Scaffold' function was used by all of the teachers and was also the one most frequently used by most of them. It was the only function where all teachers predominantly used the L2 and accounted for a very high proportion of the L2 use of the teachers who used the least amount of it. With the 'Accept' function, teachers who used L2 more frequently were more likely to use it for this function. However, the two teachers who made least use of L2 usually employed L1 for this function. Kim and Elder noted that neither function demands lengthy or complex linguistic utterances from the teacher. They also highlighted the widespread use of the 'Model/Correct/Scaffold' function and the fact that the only two functions not employed to any great extent were those that involved linguistic elaboration[10], features which point to a very restricted form of L2 input being provided through teacher-learner interaction. The paradox of the study by Kim and Elder, like that of Duff and Polio (1990) before it, is that despite the teachers' native speaker proficiency, most did not or could not maximise the quantity or quality of L2 use in lessons, thus limiting the linguistic and communicative potential of their instruction and, possibly, students' learning.

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[10] The two functions were: 'Metastatement' (a statement that refers to some future classroom event which helps students understand the structure of the lesson and the purpose of any subsequent activities) and 'Starter' (a statement, question or command that provides information or directs attention to particular types of elicitation about a task).

Kim and Elder (2005, p.377) identified two factors that may have constrained teachers' language choices: the type of lesson and teacher beliefs. Their data suggested that "task-based activities [are] more conducive to rich TL input, but only in the case of teachers like Julie who we willing and able to use the TL to perform these activities." The study did not address the issue of teacher beliefs. However, the researchers indicated that the question of why teachers alternate between languages for different pedagogic functions needs to be further investigated by gathering and triangulating data from these two areas.

A consideration of some of the discussion surrounding attempts to re-evaluate the role of L1 in L2 learning suggests that learning context may influence the conclusions that are drawn. Cook (2001), speaking from a background in EFL and language teaching in England, critiqued the main reasons[11] advanced in the literature for avoiding L1 use in the second language classroom. He argued that that they are based partly on comparison of concepts that are inherently distinct and partly on equating the need to maximize L2 provision with avoidance of L1. While not disputing the need for the learner to have plentiful exposure to L2, he argued for an integrated approach to L1/L2 use in second language classes in which L1 use is principled, systematic and active, rather than a default measure whose use by teachers provokes feelings of transgression.

In contrast to Cook (2001), Turnbull (2001) and Turnbull and Arnett (2002), arguing from a foreign language background, drew attention to the limited time learners spend in L2 programs and their lack of contact with L2 outside the class room. Turnbull and Arnett queried the classroom functions identified by Cook where L1 could be used, claiming that these functions leave little to be conducted in L2. They also asserted that giving teachers permission to use L1 would lead to them overusing it, because maximizing L2 use in the foreign language class can be a very flexible and elastic concept.

The studies of the language choices made by teachers reviewed above have demonstrated that the teachers tended to use L1 a significant proportion of the time and for most of their

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[11] The reasons cited were: arguments from how L1 acquisition occurs; concepts of language compartmentalisation; and, the need to provide for L2 input and use in the classroom (Cook, 2001).

pedagogic functions, regardless of level of teacher proficiency. Additionally, functions for which teachers employed L2 tended not to require lengthy or complex utterances. Clearly, this has significant implications for the quality of the linguistic environment including the nature and pattern of interaction that occurs, which is the focus of this research. The issue of L1 and L2 use also has theoretical implications as neither the cognitive interactionist theoretical framework, nor the sociocultural framework seems to adequately address the bilingual nature of many second language classrooms.

2.3.3 Learner-learner interaction

A great deal of research into learner-learner interaction has been carried out with adult ESL/EFL learners. Studies of peer interaction between child learners are less numerous than those between adult learners and are predominantly of ESL learners or learners in foreign language immersion programs (usually French). Few studies of child learner-learner interaction appear to have been conducted with students learning their L2 in conventional LOTE classes in primary or high schools where interaction is typically between NNS-NNS peers[12].

Research into learner-learner interaction has examined a range of issues. Studies with a cognitive interactionist theoretical orientation have concentrated on the investigating the cognitive and linguistic aspects of SLA that are facilitated by the interaction process. SLA studies based on sociocultural theory have viewed interaction as verbal mediation – that is, "the act of achieving control of tasks and activities through speaking" (Brooks, Donato & McGlone, 1997, p. 526) and have paid attention to the intrapersonal[13] as well as the interpersonal functions of communication. As noted in the early part of this chapter, central to studies based on this theoretical orientation is the social origin of language development, the role of the 'expert' in scaffolding or mediating development to the point where the learner is self-regulating or autonomous (Lantolf, 1998) and the importance of contextual factors in influencing learning. More recently, these aspects of the learning

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[12]Peer interaction in EFL classes also tends to be between NNS, whereas ESL classes (broadly defined as those conducted in English speaking countries) also offer opportunities for NS-NSS peer interaction.
[13] Defined by Brooks, Donato and McGlone (1997, p. 526) as the "means by which an individual plans for and sustains involvement in a task."

process have also received increasing attention from other researchers including Swain (1998; 2000) and Swain and Lapkin (1998), through their investigation of the role of collaborative dialogue in language learning.

Establishing the nature of the conversational interaction occurring in terms of the types and amount of feedback learners provide for each other has received considerable attention in studies with a cognitive interactionist orientation. Most early studies involved adult learners of English. Some were classroom-based and focused on comparing teacher –learner and learner- learner interaction. Others tended to be experimental or quasi-experimental in design and investigated learner interaction (NNS-NNS and NS-NNS) in laboratory-type settings. Several of these early studies found that learner-learner (NNS-NNS) interaction produced more feedback than teacher-learner interaction (Pica & Doughty, 1985) or NS-NNS interaction (Gass & Varonis, 1994; Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Paninos & Linnell, 1996). However, a more recent experimental study by Mackey, Oliver and Leeman (2003) that investigated interaction, input and incorporation of feedback in both child and adult ESL learners found that both child and adult learners in NNS-NNS and NS-NNS dyads provided each other with notable amounts of feedback. A study by Adams (2004) investigated whether interactions between learners who are NNSs facilitates learning in the same way as interactions between NS-NNS. The study, which involved 71 adult ESL learners from various L1 backgrounds, tested learners' knowledge of three English syntactic, morphosyntactic, and lexico-morphic forms following task-based interaction. The results suggest that learner-learner interactions are especially effective in facilitating the emergence of higher-level syntactic forms and may also promote the acquisition of morphology.

Experimental studies involving child ESL learners by Oliver (1995; 1998) which investigated the nature of interaction between these learners demonstrated that interaction between both NS-NNS and NNS-NNS children, like that between adults, involved conversational adjustments. The 1998 study reported on negotiation of meaning in NNS-NNS, NNS-NS and NS-NS child dyads and compared them to adults. Oliver (1998) confirmed that child learners used a similar range of negotiation strategies as adults but

differed in the degree to which they used them. Adults used comprehension and confirmation checks, self-repetition and clarification requests to a greater extent than children. Children, however, used other repetition more often than adults. In addition, child NNS pairs used all these negotiation strategies to a greater extent than child NNS-NS and NS pairs. This study also found that negotiated interaction between child learners provided additional information that helped make input understandable and opportunities for the learners to modify their own output.

A classroom-based study by Foster (1998) suggested that negotiated interaction might not be particularly characteristic of the interaction of learners carrying out communicative tasks in the classroom. The study examined the interaction of 21 adult EFL learners working in dyads and groups on tasks involving both optional and required information exchange. It found that learners did not readily negotiate for meaning to any significant degree, nor did they produce a great deal of modified output, especially when performing group tasks without the obligation to exchange information. Foster offered two main explanations for these learners' reluctance to undertake negotiation for meaning or modify their output in response to it. First, she suggested that learners might find tasks designed to promote negotiation for meaning de-motivating because they slow down interaction and draw attention to the learner's linguistic shortcomings. Second, learners' perceptions of the purpose of these tasks may differ from those of the teacher, with learners giving priority to the social and affective functions of tasks over linguistic and pedagogic ones.

An issue not addressed by Foster (1998) that is of relevance to the discussion stimulated by her study is the effect of task familiarity on the interaction that occurs between learners. Recent studies suggest that familiarity with the procedure and content of tasks both affect interaction, but in different ways. Kanganas (2002) and Mackey, Kanganas and Oliver (2007) found that procedural and content familiarity affected ESL child learners' performance on interactive classroom tasks. Unfamiliar tasks (in terms of procedure and content) resulted in learners producing more clarification requests, confirmation checks and corrective feedback. Procedural familiarity with a task gave

learners more opportunities to use feedback and familiarity with both content and procedure meant that learners were more likely to use the feedback.

Studies with a sociocultural theoretical orientation by Platt and Brooks (1994) and Brooks, Donato and McGlone (1997) drew attention to the range of linguistic and social behaviours that are part of learners' interaction when performing particular language tasks. Platt and Brooks found that, apart from exchanging information, the advanced ESL learners and beginning learners of Swahili and Spanish interrogated the task they were doing, their own language production (often in L1 in the case of the learners of Swahili and Spanish) and whispered to themselves. Platt and Brooks pointed to the regulatory as well as communicative nature of much of the language generated by learners and argued for a greater appreciation of the learners' role in contributing to and constructing the classroom learning/acquisition environment, including the tasks they engage in.

Brooks et al. (1997) set out to further investigate the discourse features identified by Platt and Brooks (1994), which they felt were often ignored or considered to be impediments to students' appropriate completion of interactive tasks, and to their learning. Brooks et al. collected data from three pairs of intermediate level university learners of Spanish, who performed five Jigsaw tasks that contained common elements over 24-72 hours. Analysis of the data showed that the learners used similar regulatory strategies and their linguistic exchanges exhibited the same discourse features throughout their interaction as the learners in the study by Platt and Brooks. Significantly, Brooks et al. were able to show how these regulatory strategies, especially the use of L1, decreased over the five Jigsaw tasks, as learners gained greater control of the language needed for the task. They argued that in promoting these discourse features, collaborative tasks such as Jigsaws offered important *intrapersonal* regulatory benefits to the learners, as well as providing opportunities for interpersonal communication for the purposes of information exchange.

That the psychological and cognitive aspects of second language learning cannot be quarantined from social and affective factors has been demonstrated in a number of studies which have shown the effects of proficiency levels on learner social dynamics and

on interaction. Yule and Macdonald (1990) investigated how pairs of adult ESL learners of high and low proficiency levels resolved referential conflicts when completing an interactive task. Unlike previous studies that had concluded that interlocutors with different levels of proficiency benefited from interaction, Yule and Macdonald found that the role taken by the more proficient dyad partner significantly affected the quality of interaction that occurred. When lower proficiency partners had the dominant role as senders of messages, the percentage of negotiated solutions was much higher and at least twice as long as when higher proficiency partners had that role. The higher proficiency partner being in the dominant role made it almost four times more likely that the pair would give up trying to negotiate a solution to the referential problem. The learners whose proficiency was higher, when dominant, tended to mandate rather than negotiate solutions, stopped giving information or ignored known discrepancies in referential information, thus effectively short circuiting the interaction by ignoring the contribution of the lower proficiency learners.

The influence of social and affective factors on the nature and pattern of interaction, and therefore potentially on learning was highlighted in a study of ESL adults by Storch (2002). The study, which drew on sociocultural SLA theory, investigated whether pairs of learners could scaffold each other's performance when completing an interactive task and demonstrated that they could indeed do this. However, the study found that the interaction between individuals was affected by the relative emphasis placed on equality and mutuality in their relationship. Four main patterns of interaction were identified. The most prevalent among the learners were collaborative relationships which balanced equality and mutuality and produced a high degree of negotiated interaction. The other three patterns were dominant/dominant, dominant/passive and expert/novice. Dominant/dominant relationships were high on equality but low on mutuality and were characterised by engagement via explicit peer repairs rather than requests and collaborative completions. Dominant/passive relationships were low on both equality and mutuality and resulted in a monologic form of exchange produced almost exclusively by the dominant partner. The expert/novice relationship emphasised mutuality rather than equality and was characterised by the 'expert' partner assuming a leadership role and

helping the 'novice' partner without being dictatorial or monopolising interaction. These patterns, once established, tended to remain stable over time. Importantly, Storch found that learners were more likely to scaffold each other's performance when patterns of dyadic interaction were either collaborative or expert/novice, that is, when they included a high level of mutuality.

Another perspective on the impact of learner roles comes from a study by Ohta (2000) involving two adult beginning learners of Japanese working on a translation task. The study used microgenetic analysis to investigate the interactional cues that peers respond to in order to give each other feedback that is developmentally appropriate. The analysis found that "the provision of developmentally appropriate assistance is not only dependent upon attention to what the peer interlocutor is able to do, but also on sensitivity to the partner's readiness for help, which is communicated through subtle interactional clues" (Ohta, 2000, p.53). Ohta demonstrated how Hal, the more expert of the learners, helped his partner, Becky, to gain control over the linguist structure that was the focus of the translation exercise by responding to her bids for help rather than her linguistic errors. Becky signalled that she needed help by not continuing with her turn and by using cues such as elongating the vowel of the word at which she paused. Sensitivity to whether Becky was continuing or not continuing with a turn appeared to be crucial to the provision of this assistance. Ohta also detailed how Hal appeared to be able to developmentally cue the help he gave Becky and to reduce this help by waiting for her to find her own solution as her accuracy improved during the activity. However, when a difficulty stopped her completely, he provided the required assistance. The insights provided by this study and Ohta's (2001) research into the qualities that make an interlocutor effective are important, given the emphasis placed on peer interaction by contemporary language pedagogy and its use in the LOTE classes investigated by this research.

An interesting aspect of this study by Ohta (2000), and one relevant to this research, is the task from which interactive data was collected. Ohta acknowledges that translation tasks do not appear to have the characteristics of task design[14] that would promote

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[14] Ohta (2000) cites the work of Pica, Kanagy and Faloudin (1993) and Skehan, (1996) in this regard.

communication practice requiring exchange of information. However, she claims, with some justification, that the learners "transformed the task into L2 activity which pushed them forward in the ability to use a difficult grammatical construction" (Ohta, 2000, p.77).

Batstone (2002) examined the 'learning' and 'communicative contexts' of engagement in language classes. He argued that 'learning contexts' (where the focus is helping the learner draw on their language resource through repetition and pre-task planning) and 'communicative contexts' (where the focus is on exchanging information) differ in how they support or constrain initial language learners, in particular. He drew attention to the characteristics of 'communicative contexts' or tasks that may constrain rather than assist beginning learners. These characteristics include: the focus on exchange of information, rather than the provision of rich contextual clues to support the learner; the requirement for the learner to push his/her output in order to access new languages; and, the complex and face-threatening nature of this enterprise because it puts the learner in a position of potential incoherence. Batstone suggested that learners have to operate between these two contexts and need to be supported to do this. His analysis of the face-threatening aspects of 'communicative contexts' may help to explain the reluctance of the learners in Fosters' (1998) study to negotiate for meaning.

2.3.3.1 Collaborative dialogue and focus on form

Research on French immersion programs in Canada revealed that learners' production skills, particularly in the areas of morphology and syntax, fell considerably below those of native speakers (Swain, 1985). This suggested that comprehensible input is necessary but not sufficient for language acquisition and led to the development of the output hypothesis (Swain, 1985). In Swain's (1995) view, attempting to produce comprehensible output leads the learner to focus on accuracy rather than fluency, in other words to focus on form. Output can help the learner to *notice* differences between his or her interlanguage and L2, to *formulate and test hypotheses* about L2 and to "use language to reflect on language use" (Swain, 1998, p.68), that is, exercise *metalinguistic skills*. This output is most typically produced in interaction involving collaborative dialogue, where language is used both to communicate and as a cognitive tool when "…learners work together to solve linguistic

problems and/or co-construct language or knowledge about language. Language mediates this process as a cognitive tool to process and manage meaning making; as a social tool to communicate with others" (Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002, p.172).

Language-related episodes (LREs) generated by learners during collaborative dialogue demonstrate their cognitive activity, that is, their learning in progress. Language-related episodes are defined as any part of a dialogue where the students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use or correct themselves or others (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p.326). Swain (1998; 2000) and Swain and Lapkin (1998) demonstrated that students undertaking dictogloss or Jigsaw tasks engaged in collaborative dialogue where they noticed differences between their interlanguage and L2, formulated and tested hypotheses about L2, and, engaged in metatalk. In other words, learners scaffolded or assisted each other's language production by focusing on form. The focus of LREs could be lexical (related to vocabulary items), form (related to aspects of grammar) or discourse, that is related to how text is structured, sequenced and shaped for an audience (Swain & Lapkin, 2001). The following LRE shows students reflecting on their language use, with particular attention being given to the verb *sortir*:

> S1: Un bras…wait…mécanique…sort?
>   *An arm…wait…a mechanical [arm]…comes out?*
> S2: Sort, yeah
>   Comes out, yeah.
> S1: *Se sort?*
>   *Comes out? [incorrect reflexive form]*
> S2: *No, sort.*
>   *No, comes out. [correct nonreflexive form]*
>   (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p.332)

The utterances by S1 in turns 1 and 3 are linguistic queries. The question in the first turn is lexical, i.e., is *sort* the right word to use here? In turn 3, the focus switches to form, as S1 seems to query whether the verb should be reflexive. S2 takes on the expert role, endorsing *sort* (turn 2) and rejecting *se sort* (turn 4). The students are involved in two interrelated processes: scaffolding and assisting each other's language production or output through focussing on form.

Swain (1998; 2000) and Swain and Lapkin (1998) also demonstrated that LREs were the point at which learning occurred. Swain (1998) reported on pre-test and post-test results of tailor-made items based on the LREs produced by pairs of learners. In the post-tests results, 79% of students responded correctly, on average, if they had solved the linguistic problem correctly in their collaborative dialogue. However, if students had not solved the linguistic problem correctly in their collaborative dialogue or could not agree about the solution to the problem, 40% responded correctly, on average. Where students reached an incorrect conclusion or disagreed about how to solve the problem, only 29% responded correctly, on average.

Significantly, Swain and Lapkin (1998) found a great deal of variation between pairs of learners. Some pairs, like the adult ESL learners studied by Forster (1998), produced very few LREs. This and students' limited time on task "suggest that students approach the task differently and will profit differentially from collaborative activities implemented in classrooms" (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p.334). Studies by Williams (1999; 2001) and Lesser (2004) have also examined focus on form in the context of tasks that promoted collaborative dialogue. They found individual performance to be variable and have pointed to proficiency as an important factor in this regard. These studies are discussed in detail as they are relevant to the current research which involves low proficiency LOTE learners

Williams (1999) examined the extent to which adult ESL learners whose proficiency ranged from Levels 1-4 could and did spontaneously pay attention to form when working collaboratively with each other in pairs or small groups. In contrast to Swain and Lapkin (1998) and Lesser (2004), whose methodology was quasi-experimental, Williams collected data from the range of activities undertaken on a regular basis by students in the class[15]. The main types of discourse moves that included in LREs were identified. They were: learner-initiated requests to the teacher or another learner about language; learner-

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[15] Correcting homework in pairs, listening to and repeating dialogue, creating texts, using words and structures from the textbook, free discussion, role plays, pronunciation and grammar activities (Williams, 1999)

learner negotiation over a language item; learner-learner metatalk; and, other-correction. Williams found that although her learners produced LREs where they attended to form, they did not do so very often. However, this type of LRE increased substantially from Level 3, indicating that more advanced learners have more capacity or willingness to initiate this kind of move. Interestingly, the more structured activities, especially if perceived by student to be a language lesson, produced more LREs.

The type of LREs learners used did not appear to be linked to proficiency with almost 80% generated by learners being lexically oriented. However, more proficient learners were more likely to produce LREs about grammatical form. Interestingly, the study found a connection between the type of discourse moves used in LREs and level of proficiency. Learner-generated requests to the teacher were the most common types occurring overall, but steadily decreased as the proficiency level rose. The opposite trend was seen with requests to other learners, which occurred more often as proficiency increased. Advanced learners were also more likely to engage in meta-talk and correct each other. Learner-learner negotiation, however, decreased in frequency both proportionally and, by Level 4, in absolute terms. Williams (1999) attributed this decline to the occurrence of fewer communication breakdowns at higher levels of proficiency.

A follow-up study by Williams (2001) confirmed the important role of proficiency. It found a link between spontaneous attention to form, performance in tailor-made tests based on learners' LREs and the learner's proficiency level, with Level 1 learners scoring notably lower than the other three levels on tests, performance increasing consistently with proficiency and Level 4 learners achieving almost perfect scores. Subsequent use of forms attended to in the LREs was also investigated and a strong connection found between these two factors, especially as proficiency increased. An important finding of this study was how the source of the LRE affected test performance and the relationship of this to proficiency level. The percentage of LREs initiated by other learners associated with correct test scores was very low, compared to those initiated by learners themselves or by teachers[16]; however, the percentage slowly increased with proficiency. The

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[16] Williams (2001) collected data about LREs initiated and supplied by teachers, as well as learners.

percentage of LREs supplied by other learners associated with correct test scores was higher overall at all levels and increased notably with proficiency level, considerably exceeding those supplied by learners themselves from Level 2 onwards and slightly overtaking those supplied by teachers at Level 4. The findings of this and the earlier study by Williams (1999) underscore the importance of learner agency in interaction, while drawing attention to learner capacities that constrain it, especially proficiency level.

The effect on the number, type and outcome of LREs produced by proficiency grouped learner dyads (H-H; H-L; L-L) when completing a dictogloss task was a particular focus of the study by Lesser (2004). The study involved 42 adult learners from the fourth semester of a content-based Spanish university course who were ranked as having high (H) or low (L) proficiency levels by their instructor. In terms of the focus of the LREs produced, the overall result contrasts with the findings by Williams (1999), as 60.14% of the LREs produced by the learners of Spanish had a grammatical focus, while the remaining 39.86 % had a lexical focus. The Spanish learners correctly resolved 76.81% of the linguistic problems they encountered.

A comparison of the number, type of outcome of the LREs produced by the three proficiency groupings demonstrated that the number, type and outcome of LREs increased with proficiency. In other words, the H-H dyads produced more LREs than the other two groups, had more LREs with a grammatical focus and more often correctly resolved linguistic problems. The H-L dyads performed similarly with respect to the L-L dyads. More specifically, the superiority of the H-H dyads vis-à-vis the other two groupings was statistically significant on all three measures (amount, type and outcome) while that of the H-L dyads compared to the L-L dyads was statistically significant only for correct resolution of linguistic problems.

All three studies discussed above demonstrate that low proficiency learners are less likely to engage in and possibly benefit from this collaborative dialogue that focuses on form. As Williams (2001, p.336) observed, "Proficiency seems to provide increasing returns; not only do the more advanced learners generate more LREs, but they also use this

information more effectively." Several experimental studies have pointed to the possible impact of proficiency on the nature and quality of interaction (Iwashita, 2003; Mackey, 1999); however, the issue appears to have been rarely explored further. Both Williams and Lesser highlighted issues that needed further investigation. Williams (1999) questioned the meaningfulness of the concept of 'noticing the gap' for low proficiency learners, pointing out that the gap for them is more likely to resemble an abyss. Both researchers identified the high level demand on low proficiency learners' attentional resources and discussed how this would inhibit the learner's capacity to notice and pay attention to aspects of form, let alone produce LREs. Both flagged the need to investigate how low levels of comprehension influence the production of LREs and also to explore the impact of the characteristics of tasks. Finally, both researchers highlighted the pedagogical implications of their findings. Williams (1999, p. 338), in particular, reaffirmed the importance of teacher direction and guidance in encouraging students to attend to form, noting that, "Despite the emphasis on collaborative learning and autonomy in this program, the learners in these classes pay close attention to their teachers."

2.3.3.2 Summary

The studies of learner-learner interaction discussed included adult and child ESL and FL learners, with a predominance of adult over child studies; however, none of the studies directly involved learners in school level conventional LOTE programs. Those studies with a cognitive/interactionist theoretical orientation concentrated on establishing that learner dyads or groups involved in interactive tasks engaged in negotiated interaction and/or feedback and in describing its nature and impact. With the exception of Foster (1998), these studies showed that learners did negotiate their interaction to a considerable extent and that they provided each other with negative feedback in response to nontargetlike utterances. Recasts were the type of feedback most frequently offered in adult NNS-NNS speaker dyads and other repetition in child NNS-NNS dyads. The extent to which adult learners modified their output in response to feedback from peers varied and tended to be low in several classroom-based studies. Importantly for this research, children in NNS-NNS dyads utilised more of the feedback provided by their partners than those in the NS-NNS dyads.

Studies with a sociocultural theoretical orientation revealed that interaction had a regulatory or *intrapersonal* as well as communicative or *interpersonal* functions and demonstrated how LOTE students interrogated the language they produced, the tasks they were undertaking, whispered to themselves and used L1 as well as L2 in carrying out these processes. The bilingual nature of both informal and formal learner-learner interaction in conventional and immersion LOTE classes was demonstrated by several studies. These studies showed that, on the whole, learners used L1 for purposes that had important social and cognitive functions. There is debate about the extent to which L1 use should be encouraged and there are no established principles to guide this.

Social relationships and levels of proficiency were identified by studies with cognitive/interactionist and sociocultural theoretical orientations as influencing both the nature and quality of the interaction between adult learners. The influence of social dynamics on meaning-focused interaction was established by a number of studies, with pairs that had high level of mutuality having the best language learning outcomes. Similarly, effective scaffolding of each other's learning by partners seemed to be dependent on a high level of sensitivity and responsiveness on the part of the learner that takes on the expert role. Proficiency level appeared to be an additional complicating factor. High/low proficiency level pairings where the high level proficiency partner had the dominant role were more likely to result in the dyad abandoning attempts to negotiate a problem and/or affect the effectiveness of the feedback provided as revealed in learner post-tests of linguistic items on which the interaction focused.

Sociocultural theorists have increasingly viewed interaction as collaborative dialogue through which learners co-construct knowledge and understanding and achieve control or internalise elements of language though initial engagement at the social level. Studies from LOTE immersion and ESL contexts have demonstrated how this collaborative dialogue can promote learner attention to form. However, the extent and effectiveness of this focus on form through collaborative dialogue appears to be influenced by proficiency level, with more proficient learners generating more LREs of this nature and hence more

likely to benefit from this interactive activity. Therefore, level of proficiency emerges as a notable factor in the nature and quality of interaction and its effect on learning.

Adult learners studying a second language in order to gain university entrance or as part of a university course were the data source for many of the above studies on learner-learner interaction. Adult second language learners from these contexts are generally highly motivated and have very clear goals, characteristics that school-aged learners do not always share. Child learners from immersion programs were another major source of data for a number of the studies reviewed. None of the studies reviewed involved learner-learner interaction in a primary or secondary school LOTE program. The extent to which the findings of these studies apply to learners in this context needs further investigation.

2.3.4 Language choices in learner-learner interaction

Use of L1 is a characteristic of both formal and informal interaction between peers in conventional LOTE classes in primary and secondary schools and possibly also at higher levels. Several studies have documented considerable L1 use by students in immersion classes (Blanco-Iglesias, Broner & Tarone 1995; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Tarone & Swain, 1995). Evidence suggests that "L1 has posed difficulties within language acquisition theory, and its role as detractor or promoter of L2/L3 acquisition has yet to be thoroughly investigated" (Varshney, 2005). Perhaps as a consequence of this, the extent and impact of L1 use in interaction has not received a great deal of attention. It has, however, been increasingly explored in LOTE contexts, especially by researchers with a sociocultural theoretical orientation and in immersion contexts.

The findings of Platt and Brooks (1994) and Brooks, Donato and McGlone (1997) about the functions of L1 in learner-learner interaction were discussed above. Antón and DiCamilla (1998) also investigated these functions by exploring the socio-cognitive functions of L1 use in L2 collaborative interaction in the classroom. Data were gathered from five pairs of adult beginning learners of Spanish completing a writing task in L2. Three main functions for L1 were identified. On a social level, the learners used L1 to collaboratively define the nature of the task in which they were engaged, in other words,

to develop a shared perspective or *intersubjectivity*. On a cognitive level, learners utilised L1 to provide each other with strategies to manage and expedite the completion of the task. These included: enlisting and maintaining each other's interest in the task throughout its performance; developing strategies for making the task manageable; maintaining focus on the goal of the task; and, foregrounding important elements of the task. Equally importantly, learners "used L1 to explicate and build on each other's partial solutions to specific problems throughout the task" (Antón & DiCamilla, 1998, p.321). The learners did this in three ways: by using L1 to access L2 forms; by engaging in metalinguistic analysis of the language they were producing in L1; and, by evaluating and understanding the meaning of text in L2 through L1. Finally, the learners used L1 to direct their own thinking about linguistic and other issues through private speech that is externalised forms of one's inner reflections or speech (Antón & DiCamilla, 1998, p.317). Swain (1985), commenting on the limitations of the input received by learners in immersion classes, identified the nature of peer input as a possible restriction. She noted that, from her own informal observations in classes studied, "most peer-peer interaction that is not teacher-directed is likely to occur in English rather than French" (Swain, 1985, p.246). Anecdotal reports also pointed to an increase in L1 use by students in immersion classes from grades 4/5 onwards. This phenomenon was verified by an observational study of Spanish immersion classes from kindergarten to grade 5 carried out by Blanco-Iglesias et al. (1995).

Blanco-Iglesias et al. (1995) examined L1 use by learners not just between peers, but also in conversations with the teacher or when responding to teacher–fronted discussion. The study discovered an interesting shift in language use between grades 3 and grades 4 and 5, both in the students' interactions with the teacher and with each other. The pattern from kindergarten to grade 3 showed a trend towards exclusive use of Spanish in both contexts. In grades 4 and 5, however, use of English by the learners reasserted itself and a mixture of both codes was the norm in five of the six classes. The authors suggested a number of reasons for this trend. English may well be regarded as the language of relaxation by students; therefore, interactions between students during transitions from one class to another were usually in English. It appears that social factors were also involved. The L1

used was characterised by "highly vernacular language forms to mark the speakers as in-group members of a pre-adolescent speech community" (Blanco-Iglesias et al., 1995, p. 251). In other words, as the students most likely did not possess the required form of L2 to signal the desired group identity, they used the language that provided this, namely L1.

Tarone and Swain (1995), focusing on the L1 use of older secondary learners in immersion classes drew similar conclusions to Blanco-Iglesias et al. (1995). They highlighted the functional distinction immersion students make between L1 and L2, paradoxically reserving L2 for academic topics (which require more complex syntax and vocabulary) and L1 for social interaction (which generally makes less complex demands on speakers) and examined the linguistic and social factors behind the learners' L1 use. A key influence appeared to be the fact that immersion students learned the academic type of discourse in L2 needed to undertake the usual classroom tasks and exchanges, but were not equipped with the L2 vernacular required for informal interaction with each other. However, the establishment and maintenance of group identity is very important for adolescents and they will use whatever language is at their disposal for this purpose.

The focus of the study by Tarone and Swain (1995) was primarily L1 use in non teacher-directed interaction between peers. The assumption appeared to be that L1 would feature minimally or not at all in interactive tasks carried out between peers. Swain and Lapkin (2000) discovered otherwise in their analysis of L1 use in interaction between learners from two classes of grade 8 French immersion performing two collaborative tasks (jigsaw and dictogloss). They found that the 10 dyads that performed the jigsaw task used L1, on average, for 29% of turns and the 12 dyads that completed the dictogloss used L1, on average, for 21% of turns[17].

Analysis by Swain and Lapkin (2000) of the functions of L1 use identified three main purposes: 1) moving the task along, i.e., getting themselves started and managing linguistic and organisational aspects of task completion; 2) focusing attention, in other words, concentrating on aspects of vocabulary and grammar; and, 3) interpersonal

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[17] The standard deviations for each class were high (21% and 18% respectively).

interaction, that is disagreements and off task exchanges. Most L1 use (54%-60%, depending on the task) had to do with various aspects of task management. Focusing on the linguistic aspect of a task, usually more vocabulary than grammar, accounted for between 22%-35% of L1 use. L1 use for interpersonal purposes was mainly for 'off task' reasons and occurred between 12%-17% of the time. The size of the standard deviations for each of the three categories, especially in one of the classes suggested considerable variation between pairs, possibly due to differences in levels of proficiency. On the basis of these findings, Swain and Lapkin concluded that L1 use had important cognitive and social functions and could contribute to learning and, therefore, should not be prohibited. However, they qualified this cautious endorsement by advising against actively encouraging L1 use, arguing that this could diminish rather than support L2 learning.

The studies reviewed above have established that both formal and informal interaction in conventional LOTE and immersion classes tends to be bilingual and identified some of the factors that influence students to use one code or the other. The studies also demonstrated the way in which L1 potentially contributes to L2 development.   The key issue is not whether L1 use should be encouraged, but the steps taken to ensure an appropriate balance between the use of L1 and L2, so as to maximise the benefits for learners.   The observations on this made by Wells (1999) in his response to Antón and DiCamilla (1998) are very pertinent:

> The data…appear to have been collected in a quasi-experimental situation in which the use of L1 was positively encouraged. If this approach were taken to its logical conclusion, however, there would be a danger of the oral use of L2 being completely neglected – a situation that would no doubt be unacceptable to the students as to the teacher. I assume …an attempt was made to encourage oral interaction in L2 as well as L1. However, the principles on which the balance between L1 and L2 is struck also need to be enunciated and justified.
>
> (Wells, 1999, p.253)

These principles and a rationale for their use are crucial for maximising opportunities for L2 development in conventional language learning contexts. They remain to be developed.

2.4 Teacher and learner perceptions

Teachers' and learners' ideas about, and experience and perceptions of, the second language learning process and their implication for theory and pedagogy have been increasingly investigated over the last decade. This section examines a number of studies relevant to teacher and learner perceptions and highlights issues pertinent to this research.

2.4.1 Teacher perceptions

Freeman and Freeman (1994, cited in Crookes, 1997, p.67) identified teachers' "personal views of learners and learning" as one of the five key factors that influenced how teachers teach. A number of studies have investigated these views as part of the broader agenda of understanding how teachers conceptualise their work (Breen, 1991; Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver & Thwaite, 1998; Gimenez, 1995; Hird, 2003; Lacorte, 2005; Woods, 1996). Breen et al. (1998), drawing on a database of teachers of child and adult ESL learners, set out to identify the principles and practices on which these teachers based their work. The study involved classroom observation and teacher interviews to verify the practices observed by the researchers and principles deduced from them. The study identified five main points of focus for the principles enunciated by teachers, namely: how they believed languages were learned; the nature of their learners and learners' needs; how to maximise learning in the classroom; what content should be taught; and, how they saw their role as teachers. These principles were predominantly pragmatic in nature and sensitive to their everyday practical realities in the classroom. As such, the principles were most influenced by situational factors such as the characteristics of learners and assessment requirements. Knowledge derived from theory, professional learning or experience were also influences, but to a lesser degree. Significantly, the study found that teachers' principles did not always precede practice, but also emerged from their classroom experience and/or in response to what were viewed as the constraints and opportunities of particular teaching situations. The relationship of principles to practice was found to be complex and individual. The principles and practices of an individual teacher were internally coherent, but could differ significantly from those of another teacher in terms of emphasis and relationship. The study found classroom context affected the way in which teachers specifically enacted a principle and that it was not possible "to infer **specific intentions or**

motivations from an observed classroom practice without discovering such things directly from the teacher" (Breen et al., 1998, p. 72).

In a similar study which involved four high school and one university teacher of Spanish, Lacorte (2005) investigated the relationship between the teachers' perceptions of their classrooms, their own teaching and their management of transition between phases in the development of a lesson. Data was collected through twelve non-participant classroom observations and three interviews with teachers. As with Breen et al. (1998), Lacorte found that teachers' pedagogic principles were based largely on personal theories of language teaching and learning that reflected their attempts to reconcile current approaches that were communicative and learner-centred with their own experiences of second learning and teaching, the pressures of classroom management, large classes and limited resources. This was evident in teachers' alternation between disciplinary[18] and pedagogic strategies[19] to control transition between phases of a lesson and in their choice of language for this purpose. Interestingly, a combination of English and Spanish was a feature of the discourse of all four high school teachers at these lesson transition points. Lacorte (2005, p.395) noted that comments made by teachers about their L1 use at lesson transition points did not seem to reflect theoretical views which identified "the cognitive value of L1 as part of the negotiation of meaning" or its benefits in making input more salient for the learner. Instead, the comments appeared to reflect teachers' own language learning, their professional development experiences, the curriculum and the nature of their students.

An investigation of similarities and differences between teachers; and researchers' conceptions of communicative language teaching by Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood and Son (2005) discovered a slightly different relationship between teachers' views and their practice than Breen et al. (1998) and Lacorte (2005). Mangubhai et al. (2005) found that teachers' views of teaching and learning includes aspects of communicative teaching

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[18] Disciplinary control consisted of individual and collective reprimands, changes in seating and other disciplinary actions sanctioned by the school.
[19] Pedagogic control involved varying the pace of instruction, negotiation of content and activities, the physical arrangements for the learning activities and the physical position of the teacher.

approaches but also incorporates many other features drawn from their own experiences as learners and teachers and not usually identified in the literature.

In terms of interaction, both Hall and Walsh (2002) and Kim and Elder (2005) drew attention to the potential influence of teachers' beliefs on the way they interacted with their learners. Hall and Walsh suggested such beliefs may influence teachers' willingness or capacity to move beyond the very restricted form of the IRF pattern of interaction. Kim and Elder speculated on the impact of teachers' beliefs about language learning and their attitude to L1 use on the content and structure of lessons. They called for research which supported classroom observation data with other kinds of data such as teacher interviews.

While teachers' broad beliefs and views of second language learning have received considerable attention, there appears to be little research which specifically investigates LOTE teachers' perceptions of and beliefs about interaction in the classroom using several different types of data. This, together with the apparently weak relationship between teacher beliefs in general and SLA theory (Crookes, 1997; Markee, 1997), points to the need to investigate these issues in the context of this research.

2.4.2 Learner perceptions

Learners' perceptions of the learning process have been examined from a range of perspectives. Allwright (1984b) proposed investigating classroom language learners' perceptions about what they learn as a way of understanding why learners do or do not learn what they are taught. Other researchers have investigated learners' perception of feedback, of tasks, of proficiency and its impact on capacity to communicate, as well as their attitudes towards second language instruction more generally. Researchers of both cognitive interactionist and sociocultural theoretical orientations have shown interest in learner perceptions. In terms of the updated interaction hypothesis (Long, 1996), learners' perceptions of interactional feedback is of importance because of the claim that negative feedback can trigger attention to and noticing of L2 features that differ from the learner's interlanguage and thus facilitate learning. Therefore, the underlying assumption is that learners perceive feedback as feedback and they understand what it is about. A number of

studies suggest that learners' perception of feedback and task may, in fact, differ from that of teachers. The importance sociocultural SLA theorists place on learner agency, active co-construction of knowledge and the social nature of learning means that learner perceptions are necessarily of interest to them.

The assumption that learners necessarily perceive linguistic feedback the way it is intended and/or recognise the linguistic element at which the feedback has been directed has been questioned by several studies. Mackey, Gass and McDonough (2000) found that learners may perceive feedback about particular linguistic elements differently than intended. Stimulated recall was used to collect data from adult learners of ESL and of Italian on their perception of feedback received from more competent speakers during task-based activities. It was found that feedback on lexical and phonological forms was generally perceived as such, but feedback on morphosyntactic forms (75% of which was as recasts) was usually more often registered as having to do with lexis. According to the researchers, the fact that recasts focus on formal elements of language (agreement, plural formation etc) rather than meaning may, in part, explain learners' misperception. Accuracy of perception of the type of feedback given is important as it is associated with an increased likelihood of learners producing modified output.

A study by Mackey (2002) involving 46 adult ESL learners found that learners' perceptions about receiving feedback were less likely to overlap with those of researchers than their perceptions about other claims for the benefits of interaction made by researchers. There was a high level of congruence between learners' and researchers' views about benefits such as obtaining comprehensible input, being pushed to make modification in L2 output, and, testing hypotheses about L2 rules. However, learners perceived they were giving or receiving feedback in less than half of the instances identified as such by the researchers.

Another aspect of student perception relates to task. Interaction research has highlighted the importance of student-centred (learner-learner) classroom activities, as well as affirming the place of activities that are teacher-fronted. A study by Garrett and Shortall

(2002) indicates that students' perceptions of these respective tasks may affect student engagement and the quality of interaction produced. The study, involving 103 adolescent and adult EFL beginners, elementary and intermediate learners in Brazil, asked participants to rate teacher-fronted and student-centred grammar or fluency focused tasks on a 5 point scale and give reasons for their rating. Overall, the researchers found positive attitudes to both types of tasks by learners at all levels. However, all students considered teacher-fronted grammar tasks better for learning than student-centred ones and student-centred fluency tasks more relaxing than teacher-fronted ones. The 'fun' quotient of the different tasks was considered to be equal.

Significantly, the results also suggested a possible link between proficiency level and learner perception of task. Both beginning and elementary learners favoured teacher-fronted over student–centred tasks for learning value to a statistically significant degree. However, this applied to tasks with a grammar focus for the beginners and those with a fluency focus for the elementary learners. Beginning learners' written comments about the value of teacher fronted-grammar tasks related to how they helped their understanding and provided opportunities for repetition and drilling. In contrast, student-centred activities were judged negatively by the beginner group because of lack of modelling and feedback, reversion to L1 and perpetuation of errors because of limited proficiency. Provision of modelling and feedback by the teacher was what elementary learners commented on positively in relation to teacher-fronted fluency activities.

Interestingly, both beginning and intermediate learners considered student-centred fluency tasks to be more fun and relaxing than teacher-fronted fluency tasks to a statistically significant extent. Intermediate learners also regarded student-centred grammar activities as more fun than those that were teacher-fronted to a statistically significant degree.

Comments on student-centred tasks stressed the beneficial effect of their social and interactive nature and also emphasised the importance of the right partner to their success. This assertion is in line with the findings of the quasi-experimental studies of student-student interaction discussed above (Yule & Macdonald, 1990; Storch, 2002). The fact

that learners at neither level made a connection between more effective learning and activities being fun and relaxing may mean that learners "expect some aspects of language learning to be frustrating and discouraging" and cast some doubts on "the commonly found notion that more enjoyment and security in the classroom is likely to lead to more learning" (Garrett & Shortall, 2002, p. 44).

Perceived competence in L2 is another factor that appears to affect interaction. A study of grade 7, 8 and 9 learners in a French late immersion program by MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Donovan (2002) examined a number of factors which influenced learners' willingness to communicate (WTC). The study found that learner' perceptions of their linguistic competence correlated most strongly with WTC. Thus the grade 7 students, whose perception of their competence was lower than that of students in the higher grades, reported themselves as being less willing to communicate than their peers in grades 8 and 9. The frequency with which learners communicated in L2 increased between grades 7 and 8 and that increase was maintained in the ninth grade. Interestingly, the lower perceived competence of the grade 7 students did not appear to be related to language anxiety. However, a negative correlation between language anxiety and perceived competence emerged for the grade 8 and 9 students.

A qualitative study of how adult learners perceive their foreign language learning experiences by Tse (2000) yielded data about classroom interaction, perceived level of success and attributions of success or failure. Learners mentioned teacher-student interaction most frequently as being positive and beneficial and identified teacher attention and sympathy important factors in their progress and ability to maintain their interest in language learning. Opportunities to speak the language and to participate in discussions, either with the teacher or peers were regarded positively; however, oral activities which involved having to speak in front of the class were disliked. Overall, students were critical of the nature of the interaction and the activities provided. The principal negative features of interaction identified were the absence of a strong focus on developing oral and communication skills and the lack of realistic vocabulary and activities provided. More than half of the students perceived themselves as unsuccessful in their language learning

and viewed their lack of oral and communicative ability as evidence of this. Learners who believed themselves to be successful had significant outside exposure to the language through their home or a community of speakers and identified this as more important to their success than effort and application. Learners who considered themselves unsuccessful attributed their lack of success to insufficient effort or drive rather than lack of ability.

McDonough (2004) investigated whether learners in intact adult EFL classrooms who carried out information gap and opinion exchange activities involving the use of the conditional improved production of target forms. The study also examined teacher and learner perceptions of the usefulness of these activities. Paradoxically, learners benefited from the activities despite the fact that they perceived them as a waste of time and preferred explicit instruction from the teacher.

The studies reviewed above have demonstrated the nature of learners' perceptions of various aspects of classroom interaction and highlighted the potential negative and positive influence of some of these perceptions on learning. The findings emphasise the complexity of the interaction process and the complexity of the learner's role in it. Even though none of the studies drew on data from learners in conventional LOTE school language classes, experience suggests that many of the findings are likely to be relevant to that context and therefore to this research.

2.5 Methodological issues

This review of the literature surrounding interaction and, specifically, classroom interaction has touched upon a number of methodological issues associated with research in this area. One of the most challenging is how to establish that the conversational adjustments provided to learners through interaction actually do make a contribution to learning. Lyster and Ranta (1997) used learner-initiated repair to judge the impact of negotiation of form. Their negative findings about the effect of recasts using this criterion have since been challenged by a number of other studies (Kanganas, 2002, Loewen & Philp, 2006; Oliver & Mackey, 2003). Incorporation of feedback by the learner or the

production of modified feedback is commonly used as a measure of uptake of feedback by the learner. However, initial incorporation is not a guarantee of acquisition and lack of incorporation, especially with recasts, does not take into account the possibility of delayed effect, a phenomenon a number of studies have documented (Mackey, 1999, Mackey & Oliver, 2000; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Loewen & Philp, 2006). This methodological issue is usually addressed in two ways. The first is to take a conservative approach to incorporation; in other words, to require repeated evidence that the learner has incorporated the feedback and evidence that this has occurred in different contexts. The second is to adopt a pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test research design to establish that the particular effect has persisted over time. Although this is a significant methodological issue, the observational nature of the current study means the matter is not addressed as part of this research.

Iwashita (2003) drew attention to several methodological issues that are of particular relevance to research involving beginning or low proficiency LOTE learners. Importantly, Iwashita (2003) examined the effect of both positive evidence and various types negative feedback (particularly implicit negative evidence) on the development of two structures in Japanese and found a benefit for both, but signalled difficulties in separating the effects of these two types of feedback. The frequency with which NS provided NNS with positive evidence in this study suggests that teacher-learner interaction may also be characterised by this kind of feedback. This, in turn, points to a need to more closely investigate it, especially in FL classroom contexts. This research study makes a contribution to work in this area.

The other methodological issue raised by Iwashita (2003) relates to the extent to which proficiency contributes to learners' capacity to benefit from feedback, whether positive or negative. Several other studies have highlighted a possible role for proficiency, notably Mackey (1999) and Williams (2001). Iwashita (2003) recommended further investigation of this issue. Any further investigation also needs to consider the fact that low proficiency may mean different things in LOTE and ESL classroom contexts, with low proficiency

ESL learners being able to function at a level of basic interpersonal communication that would be characteristic of what might be considered a higher proficiency LOTE learner.

Three other methodological issues were raised by the studies reviewed in this chapter. The first relates to the strengths and weaknesses of particular theoretical approaches and research designs and the need to collect data about an issue from different sources and using different techniques. The need to complement and supplement observational and other objectively gathered data about linguistic behaviour with the perceptions of teachers was noted by Kim and Elder (2005) in relation to understanding teachers' language choices. Yule and Macdonald (1990), Mackey, Gass and McDonough (2000) and Storch (2002) have documented the impact of perceptions and other affective factors on interaction and, by extension, on learning. The richness and complexity of classroom interaction mean that studies that include various data sources and triangulate findings from different kinds of data are more likely to accurately reflect the context in which issues emerged as well as provide more valid insights about or solutions to problems being investigated.

The second issue relates to and derives from Batstone's (2002) concept of beginning classroom learners operating between the two interactional contexts. Batstone argues that the first, more restricted 'learning' context, with its more predictable linguistic and social demands on learners may promote learner engagement, especially while learners are developing the skills to operate confidently in the more challenging 'communicative' context. Cognitive interactionist research, with its focus on conversational adjustment and meaning-focused informational exchanges, has tended to ignore the first context. Classroom research is needed to better understand how the two contexts are related and to identify the kind of help and support learners need to move productively between the two contexts.

The final methodological issue relates to the bilingual nature of conventional LOTE classes. There is plenty of evidence to indicate that both teachers and learners move between L2 and L1. There is also evidence that some L1 use that occurs may facilitate

rather than impede L2 learning. Cognitive interactionist models of interaction appear not to take this into account, thus leaving an aspect of second language learning experienced by some learners not well accounted for.

The methodological issues discussed highlight both the complexity of interaction research and classroom interaction. This research study, which is descriptive and interpretative, addresses several of the methodological issues outlined above. Its research design utilises three data sources and these data are triangulated. It also further documents the occurrence of positive evidence in interaction and provides evidence of the bilingual nature of interaction in conventional LOTE classes in primary and secondary schools.

2.6 Summary

This chapter has outlined the theoretical bases for the role of interaction in second language learning as enunciated by Long (1983; 1985; 1996) and Swain (1985; 1995) and by other SLA theorists working from a sociocultural perspective. It has examined relevant experimental and classroom-based studies to identify the nature and characteristics of interaction in that context that contribute most effectively to second language development. Teacher-learner and peer interaction were discussed separately and in detail in the classroom-based studies reviewed. Research which investigated the language choices of both teacher and learners were included in this review as use of L1 as well as L2 is common in LOTE classes. A brief overview of relevant research related to teacher and learner perceptions/beliefs has been included in this chapter as this research study includes teacher and learner perceptions of interaction.

The studies reviewed reflect the fact that research into interaction very frequently involves adult learners studying a second language in a university context and is more likely to feature learners of English than learners of other languages. Adult learners are also well represented in FL interaction studies; however, child learners feature strongly in studies drawing data from immersion programs. Both experimental and classroom-based interaction studies involving LOTE learners have pointed to differences as well as similarities to those involving ESL learners.

Most of the studies discussed involving teacher-learner interaction in conventional LOTE classes have found that instruction remains predominantly form-focused and that much interaction takes place with an IRF discourse structure. However, studies of teacher-learner interaction in ESL as well LOTE classes have demonstrated that the IRF pattern can be less restrictive for the learner than originally thought, if the teacher utilises the third turn to provide further opportunities for interaction rather than using evaluative comment to bring the exchange to a close (Antón, 1999; Hall, 1998; Hall & Walsh, 2002; Ohta, 2001; Walsh, 2002).

Research studies have differed on how and the extent to which teacher-learner interaction facilitates language learning. Pica and Doughty (1985) found that teacher-learner interaction in ESL classes provided less, but more grammatical input and resulted in learners making more conversational adjustments. In the LOTE content-based classes studied by Musumeci (1996), there was a propensity for the teacher to control the discourse and to modify his/her own output in response to learner incomprehension, rather than requiring learners to negotiate for meaning, thus limiting learners' opportunities to modify their own output. Oliver (2000) found that teacher-learner interaction provided learners with less opportunity to use feedback than learner-learner interaction. Oliver and Mackey (2003) established that instructional context influences the type and amount of feedback provided by teachers in teacher-learner interaction, the opportunities afforded learners to incorporate this feedback and the extent to which learners modify their output. Activities/instruction that concentrated on communication provided the most opportunities for learners to incorporate feedback, while activities/instruction that had an explicit language focus resulted in learners producing the most modified output.

The prevalence of recasts as a form of negative feedback in teacher-learner interaction was confirmed by a number of observational studies involving child and adult ESL and FL learners (Loewen & Philp, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Oliver & Mackey, 2003). The study by Lyster and Ranta questioned the efficacy of recasts in promoting student-generated repair in comparison to other forms of feedback such as elicitation, metalinguistic feedback and explicit correction. This claim has been challenged by the

results of other studies which point to the immediate effectiveness of recasts in stimulating learners to modify their output and their delayed effect in terms of acquisition (Doughty & Varela, 1998; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Oliver & Mackey, 2003).

The learner-learner interaction studies discussed also drew significantly on data from adult ESL learners, but included studies involving LOTE adult learners and ESL and LOTE child learners. The studies of LOTE child learners were all conducted in immersion classes. Studies concerned with adult and child LOTE learner-learner interaction that had a sociocultural theoretical orientation (e.g., Platt & Brooks, 1994; Brooks, Donato & McGlone, 1997; Ohta, 2000) demonstrated that learners use language as a regulatory and cognitive tool, as well as to communicate. The picture of interaction that emerges from these studies shows that learners' communication often concentrates on regulation of the task being completed and understanding their own learning. Learners employ a range of strategies including use of L1, commenting on their own learning and on the task, and whispering to themselves or private speech.

Swain (1998; 2000), Swain and Lapkin (1998), Williams (1999; 2001)[20], Ohta (2000; 2001) and Lesser (2004) showed how learners used collaborative dialogue to solve linguistic as well as communicative problems when completing dictogloss and jigsaw tasks. Analysis of the LREs produced by learners as part of their collaborative dialogue demonstrated this feature of interaction to be the point of learning. However, studies by Williams (2001) and Lesser (2004) indicate that both the capacity to produce LREs and to learn from them appeared to be linked to learners' level of proficiency, as the more proficient students were more successful on both measures.

Despite a dissenting voice from Foster (1998), the picture of learner-learner interaction that emerges from most of the studies reviewed shows that learners can and do negotiate for meaning and provide each other with considerable amounts of feedback using the conversational adjustments identified by Long (1983; 1985; 1996) as being important to acquisition. However, a number of studies identified learner proficiency and affective

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[20] These studies involved adult ESL learners and involved a wide range of everyday classroom activities.

issues related to social dynamics as factors that significantly influenced the nature and effectiveness of the interaction that occurred (Yule & Macdonald, 1990; Storch 2002). Several studies point to particular patterns of interaction for child learners. Oliver (1995; 1998) found differences in the type of interactional moves used by child compared to adult learners.

A feature of interaction highly evident in both child and adult LOTE classes, although possibly not exclusive to them, is the use of L1 for a range of pedagogic and communicative functions. Use of L1 is characteristic of both teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction in this context and appears to be motivated by similar needs in both groups: management of tasks and the learning environment; dealing with linguistics problems or problems in related areas such as culture that requires more cognitively demanding language; and, dealing with interpersonal issues. The impact and implications of L1 use by teachers and learners has received limited research attention in the past, but is currently the focus of renewed investigation and debate.

There is increasing evidence of the influence of teacher and learner perceptions on the language learning process. The focus of much research on teachers' perceptions and beliefs has been to explore the origin of these beliefs and their relationship to pedagogy and practice. The consensus seems to be that teachers' beliefs and perceptions are individual and more likely to be influenced by classroom experience than theory. There appears to be little research which specifically examines teachers' views of interaction and the need for this kind of information to complement other types of research on interaction has been noted in several studies reviewed in this chapter.

Research on learners' perceptions of various aspects of their second language learning has included investigation of areas directly related to interaction such as linguistic feedback, task, perceived competence and willingness to communicate, perceived level and attribution of success and overall experience of classroom language learning. An important broad insight provided by the studies reviewed is the difference that often exists between learners' and teachers' perceptions of particular second language learning

experiences. The increasingly prominent role given to learner agency in language learning points to the need for further research into learners' perceptions of the teaching and learning process.

2.7 Research questions

One of the significant areas of debate in SLA is currently about the importance of context[21]. The issue of context has been raised both directly and by implication in this literature review in a number of ways: the different linguistic contexts for second language learning – ESL or LOTE; the different contexts for research – laboratory or classroom-based; the different audiences – child, adult: and the different types of programs – content-based/immersion. The study by Oliver and Mackey (2003) directly addressed the issue of instructional context within lessons and Batstone (2002) that of learning and communication contexts for interaction, especially in relation to beginning learners. Tarone (2000, p193), addressing Long's (1996) rejection of the importance of context in SLA, presents evidence to the contrary and argues that this evidence suggests "that if we change the social setting altogether, the way the learner acquires [L2] does seem to change at least with regard to error correction, developmental sequences, and negotiation of meaning."

This literature review has demonstrated that the significant body of research into interaction and classroom interaction considered contains relatively few studies involving LOTE and almost none addressing teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction in conventional LOTE classes in primary and secondary schools. This provides the primary justification for the study. Another justification is provided by the acknowledged limitations of both the cognitive-interactionist and the sociocultural theoretical frameworks for second language learning and the fact that few studies have addressed these limitations. Investigating participation and discourse structures, the nature of exchanges and tasks and teachers' and learners' language choices in conventional LOTE classes in primary and secondary schools will build knowledge and understanding of the

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[21] Volume 26, 2004, of *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* was dedicated to the topic of 'Learning Context and Its Effects on Second Language Acquisition'.

nature of interaction in this particular context and of the impact of each of these features on the interaction that occurs. It will also highlight similarities to and difference from other contexts. This research study, therefore, sets out to answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature and pattern of interaction in LOTE classes?

2. How do particular patterns of interaction influence learners' language production?

3. Which contexts and tasks facilitate learner engagement in L2 interaction? 'Engagement' is operationalised in terms of willingness to participate in activities and tasks that involve L2 use.

4. What are learners' and teachers' perceptions of interaction and its role in learning?

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is descriptive and exploratory in nature and qualitative rather than quantitative in orientation. Data was collected longitudinally. A number of data collection techniques was used in order to gain multiple perspectives on the topic being investigated. This chapter outlines, in detail, the methodology employed in the study.

3.2 Participants

The participants in this study were learners and teachers of French and Italian from ten schools. Data were collected from six secondary and four primary school LOTE classes. Three Year 10 classes of French and three of Italian comprised the secondary school data set for the study. The primary school data set consisted of two Year 6 classes of Italian, a Year 6/7 and a Year 7 class of French. Pseudonyms are used throughout this study when referring to schools, teachers and individual students, in order to protect their identity.

Selection of classes for the study began with the identification of primary and secondary teachers of Italian and French who were known or reputed to be successful and effective practitioners, and who worked in schools with well-supported languages programs. The ten classes chosen were from Government, Catholic and Independent schools in the metropolitan area. The schools are located in areas that ranged from low socio-economic status (SES) to very high SES. It had been planned to match the SES of the schools from which the respective primary and secondary classes for each of the languages were drawn. However, because of problems in finding teachers to participate in the study, this was only partially achieved. One primary and one secondary school were single sex schools (for girls) and the remainder were co-educational. Therefore, the schools and teachers chosen represent a sample of convenience. Background information about the schools and their languages programs is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Background information on schools and LOTE programs

School	Sector	Location SES	Total lesson time (per week/cycle)	LOTE programs
Correa Primary (K-7)	Government	Metropolitan; middle SES	80mins (Two lessons per week)	All students study French in Years 3-7.
Hibbertia Primary (K-12)	Independent	Metropolitan; high SES	90mins (Two lessons per six day cycle)	French and Indonesian are taught in Years 3-12. Each Year 3 group studies one of these languages to Year 7.
Pittosporum Primary (K-7)	Government	Metropolitan ; low SES	60mins (Two lessons per week)	All students study Italian in Years 3-7.
Wilga Primary (K-7)	Government	Metropolitan; low to middle SES	50mins (One lesson per week)	All students study Italian in Years 3-7. In 2002, Italian was also taught to Year 1.
Eremophila Secondary (K-12)	Independent	Metropolitan; high SES	200mins (Three lessons per six day cycle)	French and Japanese are taught. The study of a language is compulsory from K-10.
Orania Secondary (8-12)	Government	Metropolitan; middle SES	110mins (Two lessons per week)	French and Indonesian are taught. The study of a language is compulsory in Years 8-10.
Sassafras Secondary (8-12)	Government	Metropolitan; high SES	120mins (Two lessons per week)	French and Japanese are taught. The study of a language is compulsory in Years 8 and 9.
Acanthus Secondary (7-12)	Government	Metropolitan; low to middle SES	105mins (Two lessons per week)	French, Indonesian and Italian are taught. The study of a language is compulsory in Years 7- 9.
Danthonia Secondary (K-12)	Catholic	Metropolitan; high SES	180mins (Three lessons per eight day cycle)	French, Japanese and Italian are taught. All students must study two languages in Year 8 and one in Years 9 and 10.
Nardoo Secondary (8-12)	Government	Metropolitan; middle-high SES	120mins (Two lessons per week)	Japanese and Italian are taught.The study of a language is compulsory in Years 8 and 9.

Language programs in the primary schools were for Years 3 -7 and involved one language only. Italian was being taught for 30 minutes a week to Year 1 at Wilga Primary, but only

because of time within the teacher's timetable that particular year. Hibbertia Primary alternated the teaching of French and Indonesian in Years 3-7, with each Year 3 group commencing with one of the languages and continuing that language to Year 7. In Year 8 students could choose either language. All of the secondary schools offered at least two languages and had compulsory language study for two or three years.

There was variation between primary and secondary schools in the number of lessons provided and the time allocated per week for LOTE. Most schools had two language lessons a week. However, one primary school had only one lesson and two secondary schools had three lessons over a six or eight day cycle. All primary schools had a significantly lower time allocations than the secondary schools; however, the time allocation at Hibbertia Primary was more generous than in the other three primary schools. At least a third more time was devoted to the teaching of LOTE at Eremophila and Danthonia Secondary (Independent and Catholic secondary schools) than in the government secondary schools. It should be noted that Hibbertia Primary and Eremophila and Danthonia Secondary are K-12 campuses and Acanthus Secondary is a Year 7-12 campus and their language programs reflect this.

Background information about the teachers from whose class data were collected is summarised in Table 3.2. Practitioners in the primary and secondary schools had a similar range of years of experience in teaching languages: 7-28 years for the former and 7-34 years for the latter. The average years of experience teaching languages for primary teachers was somewhat lower than for secondary teachers (14.25 years as compared to 16). However, their total years of teaching experience were considerably higher (26 years as compared to 17.5). This reflects the fact that three of the four primary teachers had worked as generalists for at least a decade before re-training to teach LOTE. The teacher from Hibbertia Primary was trained to teach both primary and secondary and taught French at both levels. Most of the secondary teachers had taught languages all of their careers and two had had teaching experience in one or more learning area outside languages.

Table 3.2: Background information about the teachers

Teacher and school	Year level	Years of experience (LOTE)	Years of experience (Total)	Other teaching experience
Teacher of French Correa Primary	6/7	7	35	Generalist primary, ESL to adults, juvenile justice system
Teacher of French Hibbertia Primary	7	28	28	French, English and History at secondary level; several years of generalist primary
Teacher of Italian Pittosporum Primary	6	10	20	Generalist primary, Italian through Art in a partial Immersion program and to Education Support students .
Teacher of Italian Wilga Primary	6	12	21	Generalist primary
Teacher of French Eremophila Secondary	10	10	10	Italian, Indonesian, ESL, English, Social Studies and Outdoor Education
Teacher of French Orania Secondary	10	19	19	Italian
Teacher of French Sassafras Secondary	10	11	20	Russian, Latin and Greek
Teacher of Italian Acanthus	10	7	7	French
Teacher of Italian Danthonia	10	15	15	French
Teacher of Italian Nardoo	10	34	34	English, Social Studies, Health

A profile of the students for each of the ten classes is provided in Table 3.3. The profile includes a gender breakdown, the average number of years the class as a whole had studied the LOTE, and, the range of years of language study among the learners.

Table 3.3: Profile of the primary and secondary school classes

School, year level and language	Total students	Gender		Average years LOTE study	Range of years LOTE study
		F	**M**		
Correa Primary Year 6/7 French	30	16	14	3.8	1-5
Hibbertia Primary Year 7 French	25	25	0	4.7	2-7
Pittosporum Primary Year 6 Italian	22	10	6	3.9	0.5-7
Wilga Primary Year 6 Italian	30	14	8	4.5	1-4
Eremophila Secondary Year 10 French	17	17	0	4.8	2-10
Orania Secondary Year 10 French	22	13	9	3.4	1-6
Sassafras Secondary Year 10 French	19	14	5	3.2	1.5-5
Acanthus Secondary Year 10 Italian	19	9	10	4.3	4-8
Danthonia Secondary Year 10 Italian	24	19	5	6	1-11
Nardoo Secondary Year 10 Italian	24	17	7	3.6	2-7.5

The profile reveals a greater number of females than males in almost all the coeducational classes; however, the predominance of females was higher in the secondary classes. The average years of LOTE study was similar in primary and secondary schools. This reflects the fact the study of a language was not necessarily an integral part of the mainstream primary curriculum during the Year 10 cohort's primary years. The number of years that individual students had studied their L2 varied considerably in most of the classes. It was especially marked for the classes from Hibbertia and Pittosporum Primary and Eremophila

and Danthonia Secondary, all of which contained several students with atypical learning histories. As suggested by the results of state-wide testing of learner performance in the Listening and Responding and Speaking Strand of the WA Department of Education and Training's *Student Outcome Statements* (described in Chapter 1), the proficiency of the learners who participated in this study was quite low. Generally, secondary learners tended to be slightly more proficient than primary learners. However, more years of language study did not always result in improved proficiency.

In summary, the schools that participated in this study were chosen to broadly reflect the structure of provision for LOTE in Western Australia and represent a number of the different types of schools in which LOTE programs operate. The teachers and students characterise some of the variety and diversity found within the programs offered by these schools.

3.3 Research design

The research design for this study is in keeping with its qualitative orientation. The design involved the collection of data about interaction from three sources: observation and recording of a series of language lessons conducted in each of the participating classes; teacher self-reports and interviews; and, interviews of groups of students from each of the classes involved in the study. The three sources of data were triangulated in the interpretation of the results that emerged from the study.

The research design was longitudinal in nature. Data were gathered from primary and secondary languages classes over a four month period. Primary school learners of French and Italian at Year 6 and secondary school learners of those two languages at Year 10 were chosen as the data set for the study. There were two main reasons for focusing on these two year levels. The first was to compare the classroom interaction of relatively young learners (10-11 year olds) with that of older learners (14-15 year olds). The second was because the recent inclusion of languages into the primary curriculum meant that the Year 6 and Year 10 learners would have studied their language for a roughly similar amount of time. Difficulties in finding suitable Year 6 French classes for the primary

component of the study meant that a Year 6/7 class and a Year 7 class were used for this part of the study. This affected the symmetry of the two languages in the primary data set but does not seem to have influenced the average years of language study for each class. Students from Hibbertia and Wilga Primary Schools had a similar average, as did those from Correa and Pittosporum Primary Schools (see Table 3.3 above). Moreover, as the final column of Table 3.3 also shows, the years of LOTE learning varied considerably within all classes.

With regard to the classroom observation, this involved non-participant observation of five complete lessons in each class by the researcher. The data were collected by means of audio and video recordings supported by field notes made by the researcher during lessons. The audio data were later transcribed for analysis and the video data used as additional information to the audio data[1]. Teachers also completed a self-report pro-forma for the first three lessons observed by the researcher.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each individual teacher and with small groups of student volunteers from each class. Teacher interviews were carried out at the completion of the whole lesson observation cycle. Two group interviews of students were conducted, one after the third lesson and the other as soon as possible after the fifth lesson. The first student interview explored students' perceptions of L2 interaction in the classroom and what encouraged or discouraged them from participating in this interaction. The second student interview involved viewing two to three brief video excerpts featuring different types of interactional exchanges from the lessons observed and eliciting students' comments on these types of interaction.

The teacher interviews explored their views on classroom L2 interaction and the conditions that encourage or discourage use of the target language. Teachers also viewed and commented on the same video excerpts as seen by students in their interviews. The use of video excerpts from the lessons observed is based on stimulated recall methodology (Gass & Mackey, 2000). However, it should be noted that this technique was adapted to

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[1] Details are provided in the Data Analysis section of this chapter.

meet the time and logistical constraints of this study and the way it was used did not necessarily meet all the criteria for its use recommended by the above authors (Gass & Mackey, 2000, p. 54), especially in relation to the distance in time between the collection of the data and its viewing by teachers and students. Gass and Mackey (2000) recommend that the viewing of the video excerpts by teachers and students for the purpose of stimulated recall take place as soon as possible after the occurrence of the interaction. Because of the limited availability of both students and teachers, the interviews generally occurred several weeks after the lessons from which the video excerpts were taken. Thus, the viewings of the video excerpts during the interviews were a prompt for reflection on classroom sequences rather than stimulated recall.

In summary, the research design for this study was qualitative in nature and involved the collection of data for two languages from primary and secondary school classes over a period of some months. It also included self-report and interview data from teachers and interview data from groups of students. The use of multiple sources of data and its triangulation was incorporated into this research design in order to both corroborate and interrogate the findings that emerged from the classroom observation.

3.4 Research instruments

The audio and video recordings of the lessons observed constituted primary sources of data for this study. The aim was to have a reasonably comprehensive visual and sound record of each of the lessons and the interaction that occurred during lessons. Audio recording of the first three lessons was undertaken with a digital tape recorder furnished with an omnidirectional microphone. This was placed on a student desk in the centre of the classroom and moved to selected groups when lessons included pair or group work. For the last two lessons, data from additional pair/group work activities were collected by using three conventional tape recorders to collect data from these groups. Two cameras were used to video record the lessons. One focused on the teacher and the other on the class or on particular groups of students undertaking language tasks. By having two videos of each lesson it was hoped to get as complete a record as possible of the interaction that occurred during the lessons.

Several research instruments were developed by the researcher and used in this study. Two pro-formas were designed: one was for use by the researcher in the compilation of field notes during the observation of lessons (see Appendix 2). The other was a self-report pro-forma to be completed by teachers after each of the first three lessons observed and then returned to the researcher. A pro-forma with examples was provided to assist the teachers' self-reporting (see Appendix 3a) as well as a blank pro-forma (see Appendix 3b). The purpose of the self-report pro-forma was to try to capture teachers' perceptions of interaction that had taken place during each of these lessons.

A separate schedule of questions was prepared for the teacher and student interviews. The stimulus questions for the teacher interviews are in Appendix 4. The first student interview covered similar areas with the primary and secondary students, but used a simplified version of these questions with the primary aged students (see Appendices 5 and 6). In the second interview students were shown several brief extracts from the videos of the lessons observed. Both primary and secondary students were asked the following questions in relation to each of the extracts:

- What do you think of this activity/exchange?
- What, if anything, helped you to participate in this type of activity using L2?
- Is there anything that discouraged you or made it hard for you to participate? What was that?
- Do you think that participation in this kind of activity helps you learn L2? How?

In summary, the research instruments used in this study were audio and video recordings, pro-formas to assist in the compilation of field notes by the researcher and for self-reporting purposes by teachers and a schedule of exploratory questions for the teacher and student interviews.

3.5 Procedures

3.5.1 Selection of teachers and schools

The data for this study were collected between the beginning of August and the second week of December 2002. Several months of planning and negotiation preceded the data

collection, during which potential participant teachers and schools were identified from information available from the then Education Department, Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools. Advice was also sought about programs staffed by language teachers known or reputed to be effective practitioners from key personnel with responsibility for languages from these sectors. The researcher drew on her own knowledge of school LOTE programs and the extensive network of primary and secondary languages teachers resulting from her long-term involvement in the Modern Language Teachers Association of Western Australia and role as president for the previous five years.

The data set of ten teachers and classes (from six secondary and four primary schools) were selected from 25 potential participants who were approached for the study. The following criteria guided the identification and selection of teachers and schools;

- most of the learners had studied the language for a minimum of 120 hours;
- a well-planned program was in place;
- the classroom pedagogy was generally consistent with a communicative approach to language teaching; and,
- the teacher did not have significant classroom management problems.

All teachers contacted, except one, and all of those ultimately selected to participate in the study were female, a gender profile that is not unusual among language teachers.

The recruiting/selection process involved a number of steps. An initial informal approach was made by the researcher to each teacher by telephone. The nature of the study was explained briefly and permission was sought to send a letter outlining the study in more detail, so that the teachers could make a considered decision whether or not they wished to take part in the research. The letter pointed out that teachers could decline without prejudice and that participation, should that be the teacher's decision, would be contingent on permission from her school principal. It was explained that the principal would be sent a letter seeking formal permission for the teacher to participate in the study if she agreed to be involved (see Appendix 7).

As already noted, difficulties were experienced by the researcher in finding suitable primary school languages teachers and classes for the study, particularly for French. For this reason, it was decided to include a Year 6/7 and a Year 7 class of French as part of the set of primary school languages classes. Although finding suitable secondary teachers and schools was less problematic, data collection from one of the French and Italian secondary classes commenced more than a month later than in the other classes because of school level organisational reasons.

3.5.2 Preparation for classroom observations

Once official permission was obtained from the school principal, the researcher sent each of the participating teachers a letter seeking confirmation of their involvement in the research project and a consent form for them to complete (see Appendix 8). The researcher then visited each of the teachers and observed a lesson with the class that had been selected for the study. This preliminary observation session had several purposes. It enabled the researcher to get a feeling for the dynamics of classroom interaction, to collect information about the school, the LOTE program and lesson organisation (see Appendix 9) and to become familiar with the classroom layout as part of the advanced planning for the audio and video recording. The researcher also used this visit to explain the nature of the study to the students, her role as a non-participant observer and purpose of the audio and video recordings and to provide this information in written form to students (see Appendix 10). The issue of confidentiality was discussed and the ways in which students' confidentiality would be protected also was outlined. A letter for parents outlining the study and seeking parental consent for their child's participation in it was given to each student (see Appendix 11).

Obtaining parental permission for students' involvement in the study took about two months. Once this was completed, a schedule of lesson observations was organised for each class. Because of the number of classes involved and the limited number of language lessons per week (between one and three) at each school, it was not possible to space the lesson observations uniformly. Some observation sessions occurred weekly, while with

others, several weeks elapsed between lessons. Table 3.4 outlines the schedule of lesson observations undertaken.

Table 3.4: Schedule of lesson observations

School	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
Correa Primary Year 6/7 French	20 Aug	10 Sept	17 Sept	12 Nov	19 Nov
Hibbertia Primary Year 7 French	21 Aug	19 Sept	24 Sept	23 Oct	18 Nov
Pittosporum Primary Year 6 Italian	16 Aug	23 Aug	6 Sept	25 Oct	21 Nov
Wilga Primary Year 6 Italian	19 Aug	2 Sept	23 Sept	4 Nov	11 Nov
Eremophila Secondary Year 10 French	29 Oct	7 Nov	20 Nov	21 Nov	27 Nov
Orania Secondary Year 10 French	7 Aug	14 Aug	21 Aug	23 Oct	30 Oct
Sassafras Secondary Year 10 French	13 Aug	20 Aug	27 Aug	22 Oct	29 Oct
Acanthus Secondary Year 10 Italian	22 Aug	30 Aug	20 Sept	7 Nov	14 Nov
Danthonia Secondary Year 10 Italian	27 Aug	31 Oct	8 Nov	20 Nov	27 Nov
Nardoo Secondary Year 10 Italian	26 Aug	12 Sept	16 Sept	21 Oct	28 Oct

3.5.3 Classroom observations

The aim of this study was to investigate the classroom interaction as it occurred in the kinds of lessons usually conducted as part of the teaching program. In briefing teachers beforehand for the observations of lessons, this aim was explained to them, as was the fact that they were not required to prepare special lessons for the observation sessions. The role of the researcher, as non-participant observer taking field notes was also explained,

along with the use of video and audio recorders for the purposes of transcription and further analysis.

At the commencement of each observation lesson, the main tape recorder was usually placed on a student desk in the centre of the classroom. The video recorders were mounted on a tripod and positioned at the front and back of the classroom in order to get the best footage possible of both the teacher and students in action. The fact that the researcher might move these pieces of equipment about during the lesson was also explained. In the final two lessons observations, when a number of additional tape recorders were used to record pair and group work, the reason for this extra equipment was explained to students and a member of the pair or group whose interaction was being recorded was asked to operate the tape recorder.

About ten minutes were needed to set up the two video recorders in the classroom. The researcher attempted to have this completed before each lesson commenced. In order to achieve this, the lessons selected for observation were, where possible, either the first of the day or those preceded by a recess or lunch break.

The researcher expected her presence to affect student and teacher behaviours in the initial lessons, in particular. These behaviours were noted when they occurred and action taken, where feasible, to minimise the impact of the researcher's presence. However, the fact that visits to each of the classes occurred over a two to three month period meant that the presence of the researcher was soon accepted as part of the class routine.

3.5.4 Teacher self-reports

Teachers were given copies of the two versions of the self-report pro-forma (Appendices 3a and 3b) about a week before the first lesson observation session, so that they could familiarise themselves with it and ask the researcher questions about it. They were asked to complete the pro-forma as soon as possible after each lesson and concentrate on recording the key things about the lesson related to interaction that they recalled most clearly.

Because of teaching or other commitments, most teachers found it difficult to complete the pro-formas immediately following the end of each lesson. Teachers reported sometimes completing the pro-formas within a day or so of the observed lesson while at other times doing this a week or more later. One teacher completed the pro-formas for two rather than three lessons and two of the teacher failed to return their pro-formas, despite several reminders from the researcher. All teachers commented on the difficulty they had in generating a post-hoc record of lessons they had taught.

3.5.5 Teacher and student interviews

The teacher interviews took place within two weeks of the conclusion of the lesson observations, at a time chosen by the teachers. All except one of the interviews occurred in an appropriate venue in the school. The exception was conducted in the researcher's home, as the teacher preferred an evening rather than in-school time slot. Teacher interviews were taped for the purposes of transcription. As indicated above, as well as exploring issues related to classroom interaction, teachers viewed and commented on the two or three video excerpts from their lessons during the interview.

Two interviews were conducted with groups of students from eight of the ten schools. These took place after the third and fifth lessons, during the students' lunch hour (usually 45 minutes in length). In conducting the interviews, the researcher attempted to establish an informal atmosphere, despite taping them for future transcription. Students were invited to bring and eat their lunch during the interview and the researcher provided some additional snacks as a reward for the time contributed by the students. It is acknowledged that the lunch hour is not an ideal time for interviews and this fact may account for the smaller numbers for the second interview. However, as this was the time strongly preferred by students (the alternative being after school), it was decided hold the interviews at that time.

Information about the number of students interviewed from each school is presented in Tables 3.5.

Table 3.5: Number of primary and secondary school students interviewed

School	Interview 1		Interview 2		Total
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	
Correa Primary Year 6/7 French	1	5	Interview not conducted.		6
Hibbertia Primary Year 7 French	0	5	Content covered in interview 1.		5
Pittosporum Primary Year 6 Italian	2	9	2	7	18
Wilga Primary Year 6 Italian	0	8	0	10	18
Total primary	**3**	**27**	**2**	**17**	**49**
Eremophila Secondary Year 10 French	0	9	0	8	17
Orania Secondary Year 10 French	2	5	1	5	13
Sassafras Secondary Year 10 French	2	5	2	4	13
Acanthus Secondary Year 10 Italian	4	2	3	2	11
Danthonia Secondary Year 10 Italian	2	5	2	0	9
Nardoo Secondary Year 10 Italian	2	3	2	1	8
Total secondary	**12**	**29**	**10**	**20**	**71**
TOTAL STUDENTS	**15**	**56**	**12**	**37**	**120**

A total of 120 students participated in the two interviews, 49 from primary school classes and 71 from secondary school classes. Students from Correa and Hibbertia Primary classes were interviewed only once, the former because the video footage of lessons contained too few examples of interaction for discussion and the latter because of time constraints. The interview with Correa Primary students took place after the third lesson. That with Hibbertia Primary students took place after the fifth lesson. As this interview did not have to be conducted during the lunch hour there was time to cover the same areas

as in the two interviews. The students who participated in the interviews volunteered to do so.

Thirty primary students and 41 secondary students participated in the first interview. Fewer students in both year levels participated in the second interview – 19 primary and 30 secondary students. However, only two of the four primary schools were involved in that interview, which accounts, in part, for the lower numbers. The lower participation rate of secondary students in the second interview may have been influenced by the lunch time interview time slot. The student groups from the coeducational schools were predominantly female. Most of the students who participated in the second interview had also been involved in the first.

The preparation undertaken for the various types of data collection, as well as the actual process of data collection was described in this section. Identification of potential participants was guided by a set of principles and relied partly on information available from and supplied by the various education sectors and partly on the researcher's own knowledge of the LOTE teaching community. Final selection of participants was influenced both by the principles outlined and by practical considerations such as availability. Both teachers and students were briefed about the nature of the various types of data collection to be undertaken before the study commenced and at appropriate points during the data collection.

3.6 Data analysis

The analysis of the data collected during the classroom observations (researcher's field notes, classroom teachers' pro-formas, audio and video recordings of lessons) and teacher and student interviews is described below.

3.6.1 Classroom observations

As a starting point, a detailed summary of each teacher's set of lessons was produced from the audio recordings of the lessons observed and the researcher's field notes, with reference to the video recordings as required. The summary briefly described the

pedagogical events that occurred during each lesson, in chronological order, the time devoted to each event and the nature of the interaction that occurred. An example is provided in Appendix 12. This summary data was analysed to identify the most common participation structures used in the classes (e.g., teacher-learner, learner-learner), the characteristic exchanges and tasks employed and the instructional contexts in which they were used and the language choices made by teachers and learners. The summary data helped identify two or three lessons from each class for transcription and analysis[2]. Of the 50 lessons observed, 23 were fully transcribed. Eight (8) of these were from primary school classes and fifteen (15) were from secondary school classes. Relevant segments from the other lessons were also transcribed. The lessons fully transcribed were those richest in teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction involving use of L2. The lessons not transcribed from each class set involved traditional grammar lessons conducted mainly in L1, listening activities that required an individual written response which was checked in L1, activities focussing on the target language culture conducted mainly in L1 and the explanation or conduct of assessment tasks.

Teacher-learner interaction and learner-learner interaction conducted mainly in L2 were analysed and coded using the same framework. Learner-learner interaction which occurred mainly in L1 was analysed and coded using a different framework. The two frameworks were developed from the literature and the data itself and are now described in detail. This analysis of teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction, described in detail below, was used to answer research questions 1 – 3.

3.6.1.1 Teacher-learner interaction

The data from the lesson transcripts involving teacher-learner interaction were analysed in two ways. The first level of analysis sought to identify and describe the feedback and interactional routines used by teachers. The second level of analysis sought to identify the patterns the interaction associated with the feedback and interactional routines used by teachers. It should be noted that the purpose of analysis at both levels was exploratory and

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[2] The organization of lessons in Hibbertia Primary (self-access tasks for students) made recording difficult and only segments of teacher-learner and peer interaction were able to be transcribed from the lessons observed. These were additional to the nine lessons transcribed from the other three primary classes.

descriptive and that the frequency of interactional features and patterns was not the focus of this research.

The first level of analysis was carried out using the framework outlined in Table 3.6. The categories for analysis in the framework were either drawn or adapted from the existing literature or emerged from the data gathered for this study. They are subsumed under three broad areas: negative feedback; positive evidence; and interactional routines. The *negative feedback* categories are taken from Long and Robinson (1998) and the *positive evidence* categories are adapted from Iwashita (2003). The term, *interactional routines,* covers those categories of interaction not included in the other two categories, but that occurred frequently in the language classes studied.

Table 3.6: Framework for analysis of teacher-fronted interaction

	Negative feedback

Implicit	NF1. Recasts
	    a. In isolation
	    b. Followed by comment or metalinguistic feedback in L2 or L1.
	
	NF2. Negotiation moves
	    a. Clarification request
	    b. Confirmation check
	    c. Comprehension check.

Explicit	NF3. Explicit correction
	    a. Overt error correction in L2 or L1.
	    b. Overt error correction in L2 or L1, followed by explanation,
	    comment or metalinguistic feedback.
	NF4. Request for learner to reformulate nontargetlike utterance.

	Positive evidence
Simple	An interactional move: PE1. that continues the learner's targetlike utterance.
Translation	PE2. in response to the learner's request for a model using L1 or in response to the learner's use of L1.
Completion	PE3. that completes a learner's incomplete utterance.

Interactional routines

Elicitation	Interaction where the teacher: IR1. elicits completion of own utterance by strategically pausing. IR2. elicits a response using questions (in L2 or L1) such as 'How do you say X in L2?' or 'What does L2 item mean in L1?'
Non-corrective repetition	IR3. repeats the learner's utterance for confirmation. IR4. incorporates the learner's utterance with additional information or commentary.
Drilling	IR5. requests choral repetition of chunks of language by the whole class or groups of students IR6. requests repetition of words or chunks of language by individuals.
Reinforcement	IR7. gives praise, encouragement or affirmation in L2 or L1, in isolation or before and/or after other interactional moves.

The term, *interactional routines*, comes from Ohta (2001)[3] who used it in her classroom-based studies of learners of Japanese. The categories of *elicitation,* non-corrective repetition and 'reinforcement' were adapted from Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Lyster (1998). *Drilling* is repetitive in nature and requires limited and prescribed responses from learners. However, it is a manifestation of the pre-emptive negative evidence referred to by Long and Robinson (1998). Ohta (2001) makes a case for considering choral responses[4] required from learners as part of whole class drills or prompts to the whole class as sources of corrective feedback. The source of feedback is not primarily the teacher, who cannot respond to individual student's oral contribution, but other student's responses and the teacher's response to the collective. Ohta (2001, p.154) argued that choral responses provide "an environment for all of the learners to orally produce responses…with opportunities to hear their own utterances and to hear how their utterances compare with those of others, resulting in corrective episodes when errors occur."

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[3] "Linguistic anthropologists Peters and Boggs (1986) defined an interactional routine as "a sequence of exchanges in which one speaker's utterance, accompanied by appropriate nonverbal behavior, calls forth one of a limited set of responses by one or more other participants" (p. 81). Interactional routines are meaningful, culturally formulated modes of expression…Because of their repetitive nature, they also structure the interactive environment in predictable way" (Ohta, 2001, p. 5).

[4] Ohta (2001) considers that choral responses serve the same function as private speech or oral language that is spoken for dialogue with the self, rather than communicative interaction with others, for students who make little or no use of private speech.

As with all hybrid classification systems, some categories are less discrete than others. Some overlap may exist between IR4 and PE1. However, it was clear from the data that the two have different functions and thus their distinct classification. The function of IR4 is essentially hortatory and transitional, giving encouragement and approval to the learner's effort in using L2. It typically occurred within the restricted version of the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) discourse structure (referred to as IRF1 and described in detail in the next chapter), in which the response provided by the teacher in the third turn serves to close the exchange. On the other hand, PE1 generally occurred within the expanded version of the IRF discourse structure (referred to as IRF2 and described in detail in the next chapter) and usually served to continue and extend an exchange beyond the third turn by requiring or inviting a response from the learner.

The second level of analysis, carried out using the framework outlined in Table 3.7, examined the patterns of interaction associated with the feedback and interactional routines used by teachers.

Table 3.7: Framework for analysis of patterns of teacher-learner interaction

Patterns	Exemplification
Two-part sequence pattern input initiated by teacher (implied) → learner reaction →teacher response	Teacher question/request → learner response → teacher feedback (IRF 1 structure)
Three-part sequence patterns (as per Oliver, 2000) learner utterance → teacher response → learner reaction	1. Correct → continue → continue 2. Correct → negotiate → continue 3. Incomplete → continue → continue 4. Incomplete → negotiate → continue 5. Nontargetlike → NF → ignore 6. Nontargetlike → NF → respond 7. Nontargetlike → NF → no chance 8. Nontargetlike → ignore → continue Other three-part sequence patterns evident in the data
Additional patterns	As emerged from the data

The development of this framework drew on the two-part sequence patterns characteristic of the IRF1 discourse structure and three-part sequence patterns identified by Oliver (1995; 2000), which were associated with the IRF2 discourse structure. This framework is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6.

The coding of the data for both feedback and interactional routines and patterns of interaction was undertaken by the researcher and a second trained rater for each language. The inter-rater reliability for this coding is reported in Chapters 5 and 6.

3.6.1.2 Learner-learner interaction

Analysis of learner-learner interaction was informed by the type of task involved and learners' language choices. Pair and group work activities and tasks were classified according to two categories taken from Ellis (2001):

- functional language practice activities; and,
- focused communicative tasks.

Functional language practice activities are defined as "instructional materials that provide learners with the opportunity to practice producing the target structure in some kind of situational context" (Ellis, 2001, p. 20). In contrast, Ellis describes focused communicative tasks as "designed to elicit production of a specific target feature in the context of performing a communicative task" (Ellis, 2001, p. 21). They differ from communicative tasks in general in that learners are required to use some feature of language that has been specifically targeted. What distinguishes them from functional language practice activities is their primary focus on meaning rather than on form.

Both functional language practice and focused communicative tasks[5] were conducted mainly in L2. Data involving these tasks were coded using the same framework as for teacher-learner interaction (see Table 3.6 above).

Focused communicative tasks involving collaboration between learners to produce a text in L2, however, were carried out mainly in L1. For this reason, data involving these tasks

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[5] These tasks are described in detail in Chapter 7.

were analysed to identify Language-related Episodes (LREs) related to lexis, form and discourse (Swain & Lapkin, 2001). Swain and Lapkin (2001) define LREs as any part of a dialogue where the learners talk about the language they are producing, question their language use or correct themselves and others. The data were also coded to identify the type of interaction associated with particular types of LREs using the following adaptation of a coding scheme developed by Williams (1999):

- learner requests to each other about language;
- learner-learner metatalk;
- other-correction;
- learner-initiated requests to the teacher about language; and,
- interactional moves and routines between learners.

The coding of the data for both LREs and types of interaction was undertaken by the researcher and a second trained rater for each language. The inter-rater reliability for this coding is reported in Chapter 7.

The purpose of the analysis the learner-learner interaction was to describe what occurred, as the study was concerned with the type of interaction and not proportional use.

3.6.1.3 Teacher self-reports

Eight of the ten teachers whose classes were observed completed and returned their self-reports after the first three lessons. Most of these teachers completed the reports some time after the end of each lesson, following prompting from the researcher. Most indicated they found the task of reporting retrospectively on their lessons difficult and provided very little detail additional to key events occurring in the lesson. Therefore, the self-reports were reviewed globally to identify any relevant insights into the questions being investigated.

3.6.1.4 Teacher and student interviews

Analysis of the teacher and student interview transcripts sought to identify the underlying beliefs of these two parties about interaction in second language learning and their views

about specific aspects of interaction that occurred in their classes. Their views about the contexts that facilitate this interaction were also explored.

A similar process was followed in the analysis of each set of data. Preliminary analysis of the data was undertaken based on the principles of grounded theory. This was done to identify the principal themes and issues emerging from the interviews. Each data set was further analysed to refine and aggregate the identified themes and issues into broad groups of three to six for discussion. This work was informed by the findings from the classroom observation component of the research. Analysis also focused on comparison between respondents within each data set – i.e., teachers from primary and secondary schools and primary and secondary aged learners.

3.7 Summary

The exploratory nature of this research is reflected in its methodology. The research design was longitudinal in nature and involved the collection of several different types of data. Data on classroom interaction were gathered from French and Italian language classes in four primary and six secondary schools. Five lessons were observed in each of the ten classes over a period of four months and audio and video recordings were made of each of these lessons. These data were supplemented by the researcher's field notes and teacher self-reports. In addition to the classroom observation data, interviews were conducted with all ten teachers and small groups of students from each of the classes to discover their perceptions about interaction. The audio recordings of three of the five lessons observed were transcribed, as were the teacher and student interviews. Specific frameworks were developed for the analysis of the classroom interaction data for descriptive presentation. Transcripts of teacher and student interviews were analysed to identify key themes and issues.

The previous chapter highlighted a number of issues raised by the literature related to the classroom interaction research and the interaction of low proficiency learners. The research design, which includes a variety of data sources, recognises the complexity of classroom interaction and addresses the need to complement and supplement

observational data about the linguistic behaviour of teachers and learners with the protagonists' views of this behaviour in order to get a more complete picture of the interaction process. The frameworks devised for analysis teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction (Tables 3.6 and 3.7 above) attempt to capture the spectrum of this interaction. In the case of teacher-learner interaction, it includes the use of positive evidence as well as negative feedback and a range of interactional routines. In the case of learner-learner interaction, it pays attention to the interaction which occurs mainly in L1 as well as that which involves mainly L2.

The next chapter describes the nature of the interaction encountered in the ten classes studied. Subsequent chapters present and discuss more specific findings about teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction.

CHAPTER 4
THE NATURE OF INTERACTION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the nature of the interaction that occurred in the ten language classes that were studied. Four aspects that characterise this interaction are examined: the participation structures[1] that shaped the interaction; the exchanges and tasks through which the interaction occurred; teachers' and learners' language choices; and, the discourse structure underlying the interaction. The main participation structures observed in the classes are described and information provided about the proportion of time spent on each of them. A typology of the exchanges and tasks used in the classes and the context in which they usually occurred is presented. As interaction in these classes occurred in English (henceforth referred to as L1) as well as L2, teachers' and students' language choices are reported. The characteristics of the discourse structure in the classes are also examined and discussed.

4.2 Participation structures

Three main types of participation structures were observed in the ten classes. The most prevalent was teacher-fronted interaction, that is, teacher-learner interaction initiated and controlled by the teacher. This had two manifestations. The most common form was where the teacher worked with the whole class and typically interacted with a succession of individuals, while expecting the attention and participation of the rest of the class. This is referred to as teacher-class interaction (T-C). A subset of T-C involved the teacher interacting with learners doing pair work or tasks in small groups. This is referred to as teacher-small group interaction (T-SG). Learner-teacher interaction (L-T) or interaction between individual or groups of students and the teacher, usually initiated by the learner also occurred in many of the classes, although not with great frequency. The other main participation structure was learner-learner interaction (L-L), or interaction between pairs or groups of students. This was usually related to a particular task set by the teacher, but was also self-generated.

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[1] The term 'participation structure' is taken from Ellis (2001).

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As indicated above, T-C and L-L interaction were the main participation structures in all the classes. Their relative frequency is detailed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Time spent on T-C and L-L interaction over five lessons

School/Class	T-C Interaction			L-L Interaction		
	Mean Raw Data (mins)	**% Mean**	**% Range**	**Mean Raw Data (mins)**	**% Mean**	**% Range**
Correa Primary Yr 6/7 French	116/145	80	45-100	29/145	20	0-55
Hibbertia Primary Yr 7 French	9/178	5	3-10	N/A	25*	N/A
Pittosporum Primary Yr 6 Italian	98.5/147	67	43-100	48.5/147	33	0-57
Wilga Primary School Yr 6 Italian	77.5/204	38	22-62	126.5/204	62	34-78
Eremophila Secondary Yr 10 French	113/213	53	15-98	100/213	47	2-85
Orania Secondary Yr 10 French	154/205	75	42-100	51/205	25	0-58
Sassafras Secondary Yr 10 French	136/239	57	24-92	103/239	43	8-76
Acanthus Secondary Yr 10 Italian	134/239	56	33-73	105/239	44	27-66
Danthonia Secondary Yr 10 Italian	191/245	78	62-90	54/245	22	10-38
Nardoo Secondary Yr 10 Italian	208/245	85	78-94	37/245	15	10-22

* This percentage is based on the proportion of self-access tasks available to the students in this class that required peer interaction, rather than individual work.

Table 4.1 gives an estimate of the amount of time devoted to them in each of the classes over the five lessons observed. The mean (raw data followed by percentage) for the five lessons and the percentage range of the lowest and highest amount of time spent on each of these two participation structures for the five lessons is given,. It was not possible to provide meaningful percentages for the amount of time spent on T-SG and L-T interaction because they occupied small snatches of time, were often asides from the main dialogue and were documented only when a tape recorder was within the range of the interaction.

The overall prevalence of T-C interaction as a participation structure in the classes is evident in Table 4.1. However, the proportion of time spent on T-C interaction as compared to L-L interaction varied considerably between classes and, as the percentage range shows, between individual lessons in different classes. Teacher-class interaction occupied an average of three quarters or more of the time (75%-85%) in the four classes (Correa Primary and Orania, Danthonia and Nardoo Secondary) and was clearly the dominant participation structure in these classes. The proportion time spent on T-C interaction as compared to L-L interaction in the remaining classes was more balanced, with L-L interaction occupying more than 40% of the time in the three secondary classes (Eremophila, Sassafras and Acanthus Secondary) and more than 30% in the two primary classes. Notably, in Wilga Primary, an average of more than 60% of lesson time was spent on L-L interaction.

In the French class at Hibbertia Primary students worked individually and/or in pairs on a self-access program of language learning tasks. Teacher-class interaction, therefore, occurred only briefly at the beginning and end of lessons as part of classroom management or, as occurred in one lesson, during a whole class game directed by the teacher. The percentage of L-L interaction was difficult to quantify in this class as only some of the self-access tasks required interaction with a peer and students were engaged in a range of tasks in any particular lesson. The figure of 25% therefore represents the tasks from the self access set that specifically required L-L interaction.

Although not represented in Table 4.1, T-SG and L-T interaction deserve comment. Teacher-small group interaction almost always occurred during tasks involving L-L interaction, during which teachers usually moved from group to group, monitoring learners' language use, helping when requested or when judged appropriate and keeping pairs or groups on task. It tended to be more prevalent in classes where L- L interaction was a frequent occurrence. Because of this co-occurrence with L-L interaction, and for the reasons outlined above, it was difficult to quantify the time devoted to it within classes; however, instances were observed in all classes. The most systematic and sustained use was observed in the classes at Hibbertia, Pittosporum and Wilga Primary and in those at Acanthus, Eremophila and Sassafras Secondary. The high level of T-SG interaction in the French class at Hibbertia Primary was predictable as students were working on self-access tasks. The teacher in this class was also very skilful at interacting with students in this way, and usually used L2 in these exchanges. It became apparent during the lesson observations that one of the advantages of self-access work is that it frees the teacher to engage in this type of interaction. The high level of L2 use by this teacher and her capacity to engage in conversational interaction with individuals and small groups, as well as help them in more conventional ways, are likely to have been beneficial to students' language learning.

Student initiated learner-teacher interaction took place during T-C interaction, as well as during tasks which involved L-L interaction. However, it was more likely to occur in the latter context, possibly because students find this context less threatening as they are normally working with friends. Moreover, the teacher usually has a roving helper role in this context designed to encourage students to ask for help when they need it. Learner-teacher interaction almost always occurred in L1 and typically consisted of the student requesting help for difficulties being experienced with a task or asking for specific language associated with it or for metalinguistic information. For example, students sought clarification about an aspect of a task that was not understood. They checked about the formation of singular and plural nouns and the rule that lay behind this, queried when to use the definite article, questioned whether a particular form of the verb was the

right one to use, sought clarification about the difference between 'moins' and 'au moins' and asked for confirmation as to whether a particular word in an exercise was a verb.

4.3 Typology of exchanges and tasks

The main types of exchanges and tasks used in teacher-class and learner-learner interaction in the ten classes investigated are listed in Table 4.2. Their identification draws on findings about patterns of classroom practice reported by Mitchell and Martin (1997). Exchanges and tasks are classified according their principal area of focus: management; form; meaning, and content. These focus areas are based on those identified by Oliver and Mackey (2003) in their study of the influence of interactional contexts in the provision of feedback in child ESL classrooms.

The definition of each focus area has been adapted from Oliver and Mackey (2003) to include L-L as well as T-C interaction[2] and to reflect features in the data, especially for the 'form' and 'meaning' focus areas. Both T-C and L-L interaction include examples of exchanges and/or tasks for each focus area, with most time being devoted to exchanges and tasks involving 'form' and 'meaning' in both participation structures. In contrast to Oliver and Mackey, who found that 40% of T-C exchanges occurred in the 'content' context, only a very small proportion of time in the LOTE classes observed involved exchanges and tasks related to 'content'. Predictably, this context features significantly in content-based language instruction such as occurs in ESL and foreign language immersion classes, but is far less evident in LOTE classes, where L2 is both the object of instruction and its main content.

The exchanges and tasks listed in Table 4.2 are discussed by focus area and, in each instance, the T-C interaction items are discussed first, followed by the L-L interaction items.

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[2] The study conducted by Oliver and Mackey (2003) investigated teacher-fronted interaction only.

Table 4.2: Typology of exchanges and tasks observed in the ten classes

Focus area	Exchanges and tasks	
	Teacher-class interaction	**Learner–learner interaction**
Management **T-C:** Exchanges related to the management of learners, tasks, the learning environment and resources and equipment. **L-L:** Exchanges related to learners' management of their roles, the task, the environment and personal/interpersonal issues.	1. Greetings, leave-takings, positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviours 2. Classroom discipline 3. Acknowledgement, praise encouragement for L2 use 4. Turn taking 5. Explanation/organisation/monitoring of tasks 6. Distribution/collection of materials or equipment 7. Other e.g., explaining excursions.	1. Clarification of task 2. Assigning roles 3. Turn taking 4. Seeking/giving help 5. Personal and interpersonal exchanges.
Form **T-C:** Exchanges and tasks whose main focus is instruction about, modelling and practice of elements of the L2 grammatical system. **L-L:** Exchanges and tasks that focus on rehearsal, practice or performance of L2 form.	8. Q/A drills, pattern practice 9. Incidental review/instruction on L2 form, including metalinguistic commentary, in context 10. Formal instruction on an aspect of the L2 grammar 11. Games focusing on practice of vocabulary/grammar.	6. Drills, pattern practice, Q/A rehearsing L2 form 7. Presentations and performances including role plays based on a model dialogue 8. Surveys 9. Completing written exercises on L2 form
Meaning **T-C & L-L**: Exchanges and tasks which focus on communication. Learners rely on well-rehearsed as well as spontaneous language to communicate their message.	12. Q/A 'conversations' – exchanging personal information or opinions on a topic 13. Informal exchanges in the L2 between teacher and learner 14. Brainstorms, pooling of ideas 15. Review/discussion of learner generated texts 16. Reviewing/discussing responses to an L2 text (aural or written).	10. Information gap tasks 11. Jigsaw activities 12. Joint construction of texts for role plays, debates etc. 13. Games requiring some skill or interpretation.
Content **T-C & L-L:** Exchanges that impart knowledge and/or elicit information on a content or skills area.	17. Presentation and discussion of aspects of L2 culture.	14. Answering questions about aspects of L2 culture from information provided in an L2 text.

4.3.1 Management

Both T-C and L-L interaction involve exchanges that focus on management issues. In T-C interaction, the management focus area refers to exchanges related to the organization of the lesson and learners (including turn taking), management of tasks, the learning environment and equipment. In learner-learner interaction, this area refers to exchanges where learners managed their roles, the task, the environment and personal/interpersonal issues.

Exchanges that involved *management* occupied a considerable proportion of both teacher-class and learner-learner interaction. They were similar in nature for both participation structures and in both situations the response required from the interlocutor being 'managed' was frequently in terms of action rather than speech. Teacher-class managed exchanges that required limited use of language (TC1-3) were usually carried out in L2, while those which needed more extended use of language (TC4-7) were generally conducted in L1. The L-L managed exchanges were usually carried out in L1.

An excerpt from the beginning of a French lesson in Sassafras Secondary includes several types of the T-C exchanges listed in Table 4.2 and shows the teacher's language choices for the different type of exchanges:

> *Excerpt 1[3]*
>
> 1. *T:* Ok, merci. *(Names student)* Bonjour, ça va? Tu vas bien? Tu vas bien? Et toi *(Names another student),* tu es triste? *(makes a long face)*
> *Ok, thanks…Good morning, how are you? Are you well? Are you well? And you…are you sad?...*
>
> 2. *Std 1:* J'ai froid.
> *I'm cold.*
>
> 3. *T:* Tu as froid! Tu peux fermer la fenêtre si tu veux. Oui? Non? *(The student shuts the window. Teacher to another student.)* Et toi, tu vas bien? *You're cold? You can close the window if you want. Yes? No?... And you, are you well?*

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[3] Teacher and learner errors in audio recordings are reproduced in the excerpts from the lesson transcriptions included in this chapter.

4. *Std 2:* Oui.
   Yes.

5. *T:* Oui. What we're going to do today, first of all we're going to do a short game, a bit of a competition. I don't know if you've ever seen the vicar of Dibley? *(Assent from class.)* You have. Oh wonderful! Do you remember that lady, la vieille femme who was cooking those revolting cakes? For instance she would make a chocolate cake with vegemite icing.

6. *Class:* Uuughh.

7. *T:* What I'd like you to do today is to invent something 'dégoûtant' (writes word on board). Dégoûtant c'est le contraire de délicieux.   Délicieux c'est le contraire de dégoûtant. *(Names student)*
   ...Disgusting is the opposite of delicious. Delicious is the opposite of disgusting.

                                                    (Sassafras Secondary)

In this exchange the teacher secures the attention of the class (Ok, merci), then establishes the linguistic environment and seeks to build rapport with the students through social chit-chat in L2 (turns 1 and 3). This achieved, she begins to explain the proposed task (turns 5 and 7), starting in L1 but reverting to L2 in the middle of turn 7 as she commences the activity proper.

Learners involved in peer interaction have to deal with transitions and task clarification as the following example shows:

   Excerpt 2

   1. *Std B:* Ok, one night only. *(Laughter)* Ok, do you want to try something else?

   2. *Std A:* Close by.

   3. *Std B:* So. Il y a une hôtel près d'ici.
                                                    (Eremophila Secondary)

This excerpt is taken from a role play based on a model dialogue about booking a hotel room. Learners use vocabulary items provided on the worksheet which describe different features of the room to create variants of the role play. The pair has gone through the model dialogue once and the comment "one night only" refers back to that. Student B then ensures they continue their practice by asking her partner if she wants to try

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something else. Student A indicates she wants to practice asking for a hotel close by and
Student B then begins the role play again.

4.3.2 Form

The *form* focus area refers to T-C exchanges and tasks which are concerned with
instruction about and/or modeling and practice of elements of the L2 grammatical system.
In T-C interaction, instruction about L2 includes incidental, contextualized 'focus-on-
form' as well as pre-emptive or traditional grammar instruction. Learner-learner
exchanges and tasks focus on rehearsal, practice or performance of L2 form.

In T-C interaction, exchanges and tasks that had *form* as their focus involved either the
practice of particular linguistic items (T-C8 and 11) or explanations about linguistic items
(T-C9 and 10) and one type of exchange often grew out of the other. Q/A drills and
pattern practice were more evident in the primary than secondary classes. Excerpt 3
illustrates Q/A pattern practice in a primary school class:

> *Excerpt 3*
>
> 1. *T:* …Now *(names a student)* I'd like you to ask someone how to get to the
>   bank. Now it's very easy. Pour aller, pour aller *(student repeats)* à la banque
>   *(student repeats)* s'il vous plaît? *(student repeats)* Excusez-moi Monsieur or
>   Madame, pour aller à la banque, s'il vous plaît? Pour aller à la banque, s'il
>   vous plaît? To get to the bank please? And they will have to tell you, la
>   banque c'est à gauche. La pharmacie c'est à droite. Au café -continuer tout
>   droit. Do you think you can ask somebody?
>   *Please, what's the way to the bank? Excuse me Sir or Madame, how do I get
>   to the bank, please…The bank is on the left. The chemist is on the right. To
>   get to the café go straight ahead.*
>
> 2. *Std 1: (doesn't say anything)*
>
> 3. *T: (prompting)* Excusez-moi, pour aller - come on. Pour aller-
>   *Excuse me, to get to … to get to –*
>
> 4. *Std 1:* Pour aller –
>
> 5. *T:* Pour aller à la banque, s'il vous plaît? - *(to other student)* you have to
>   answer. La banque.
>   *To get to the bank, please? …The bank.*

6. *Std 2:* La banque *(tries to say à droite)*

7. *T:* I think you say à gauche.
   ...on the left.

8. *Std 2:* à gauche
   ...on the left.

9. *T:* La banque c'est à gauche. Ok, you get to ask someone else.
   The bank is on the left.
   (Correa Primary)

As part of working with the whole class group to practice asking for directions, the teacher revises the items to be used (turn 1), then helps Student 1 to frame a question (turns 2-5) and Student 2 to respond (turns 5-8) and finally repeats in full Student 2's reply to his peer's question (turn 9).

Incidental, contextualised 'focus-on-form' occurred in both primary and secondary classes, while traditional pre-emptive instruction on aspects of grammar featured only in all the secondary classes[4] and in all but one of them occupied the whole or a significant part of a lesson. The following example of incidental instruction on form is from a secondary class:

Excerpt 4

1. *T:* What was the key word that would have told you about hotels, about having problems when staying in hotels?

2. *Std 6:* la problema.
   ...problem.

3. *T:* Is it 'la problema? It looks as though it should be 'la', but it's actually 'il problema', 'il problema'. Ok. If it's more than one problem, it's 'i' problemi'. OK *(writes word on board.)* It's an irregular word, an irregular noun, problema, problemi.
   ...the problem ...the problems ...problem, problems.
   (Danthonia Secondary)

Games directed by the teacher where the purpose was to practice linguistic items occurred as part of lessons observed in most of the ten classes. Simple games which involved recall

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[4] Coincidentally, these lessons all looked at the conjugation of particular verb tenses, the future in three classes, irregular verbs in the present tense in two others and reflexive verbs in the other. In all but one class the interaction about the language items occurred in L1.

and practice of vocabulary associated with topics being studied such as 'Bingo' or 'Lotto' featured in the primary classes. Games in the secondary classes usually concentrated on practice and accurate reproduction of identified linguistic structures. For example, a game played in the Acanthus Secondary class called 'Running Board' required pairs of students from two competing class groups to translate an L1 sentence involving the verb 'to go' and write it on the board in L2. If a student made a mistake, he/she was replaced by another member of the group. The winner was the group to first accurately complete the whole sentence.

Learner-learner interaction that related to form consisted of practice, rehearsal or performance of identified elements of language and these occurred as part of pair or small group tasks in most of the classes. Excerpt 5, which is taken from a role play, illustrates the type L-L interaction that concentrates on form:

> *Excerpt 5*
> 1. *Std B:* Je voudrais une chambre à un lit et – um – sans bain – s'il vous plaît. Er, je voudrais payer quarante francs.
> *I'd like a single room … without a bath – please. …I'd like to pay forty francs [a night].*
>
> 2. *Std A:* Er, vous avez réservé?
> *Have you booked?*
>
> 3. *Std B:* Non, je n'ai pas réservé.
> *No, I haven't booked.*
>
> 4. *Std A:* Je regrette mademoiselle - er mais j'ai seulement une chambre – à une lit – et, avec une bain. Elle coûte soixante - francs.
> *I'm sorry miss – but I've only a single room – and with bath. It costs sixty francs.*
>
> 5. *Std B:* Bon, d'accord, je prends cette chambre. That's it. Umm.
> *Good, that's fine, I'll take that room. …*
> (Eremophila Secondary)

In this excerpt, the students are practising how to book a room in a hotel using a sample dialogue and changing the details (words, phrases) about the kind of room required and what they're prepared to spend, according to information supplied on a worksheet. In the data, role plays tended to involve the performance of scripts based on models provided by

the teacher and adapted in a small way by students, as in excerpt 5, rather than being meaning focused and thus requiring more spontaneous use of language. They were therefore included in the 'form' focus area.

4.3.3 Meaning

Exchanges and tasks in the *meaning* focus area are those which concentrate on exchanging information in L2 rather than aspects of L2 grammar or form. However, in LOTE classes of the type included in this study, meaning-focused exchanges in both T-C and L-L interaction often involve the exchange of information in a rather restricted sense. There are two reasons for this. The first is the low proficiency level of learners, which means that they have very limited capacity to respond spontaneously in L2. The second is the language rather than content orientation of the teaching program. Ellis (2001) argued that the traditional dichotomy between tasks that focus on practice of form and those that focus on communication does not reflect the reality of classroom second language learning. He proposed an intermediate category termed 'focused communicative tasks' (Ellis, 2001, p. 20). Such tasks are essentially meaning-focused but differ from true communicative tasks in general in that learners are required to use some feature of language that has been specifically targeted. In line with this definition, the meaning-focused exchanges that occurred during T-C interaction examined below are partially communicative in nature but may also require learners to focus on a particular grammatical feature.

Although exchanges and tasks in T-C and L-L interaction have a similar purpose, they each typically involve different types of tasks. In the data, T-C interaction tended to feature different kinds of meaning-focused exchanges and tasks in different classes. Warm-up Q/A 'conversations' (T-C12) at the beginning of lessons were a particular feature of the classes at Sassafras and Acanthus Secondary. In these classes they were given a communicative emphasis while at the same time providing an opportunity for learners to practice a targeted language feature. This kind of Q/A exchange (albeit with a more overt grammatical emphasis) was also used to introduce a lesson at Eremophila Secondary, but was not in evidence in any of the remaining secondary or in the primary classes. These 'conversations' were often quite extended, lasting ten minutes or more. An

extract from one of them, where the teacher discusses the kind of dishes eaten in each course at dinner with students, is provided in the following excerpt:

> *Excerpt 6*
>
> 1. *T:* Di solito, a che ora mangi la cena?
>   *When do you usually have dinner?*
>
> 2. *Std 2:* Le 9.30.
>   *9.30.*
>
> 3. *T:* La cena, la sera. La cena. Non la prima colazione, non il pranzo. La cena la sera.
>   *Dinner. Evening. Not breakfast, not lunch. Dinner in the evening.*
>
> 4. *Std 2:* Alle sei.
>   *At six.*
>
> 5. *T:* E di solito cosa mangi come antipasto? -
>   *And what do you usually have for entrée.*
>
> 6. *Std 2:* Uumm. -
>
> 7. *T:* Come antipasto, mangi la bruschetta? -
>   *Do you have 'bruschetta' as entrée.*
>
> 8. *Std 2:* Uumm, mangio la bruschetta .
>   *… I eat bruschetta.*
>
> <div align="right">(Acanthus Secondary)</div>

While this 'conversation' targets meal time vocabulary, its main purpose is the exchange of information.

Informal exchanges in the L2 between teacher and students occurred occasionally in several of the secondary classes (Acanthus, Sassafras, Nardoo). An instance is documented in turns 2-4 in excerpt 1 above.

All classes featured some teacher-fronted interaction the purpose of which was to brainstorm and pool ideas (T-C14). The teacher from Acanthus Secondary used this extensively as part of preparation for a Jigsaw task and to review the part of the task completed by each group. Review and discussion of learner-generated texts led by the teacher featured in lessons from Danthonia and Nardoo Secondary. This type of exchange

began all of the lessons observed at Nardoo Secondary where students' first task was always to write a diary entry, several of which were then read out and discussed. An example of teacher-led discussion of one item follows:

Excerpt 7

1. *T: (Names student)* per piacere dammi una frase, dammi una frase che hai scritto.
   Please give me a sentence, give me a sentence that you've written.

2. *Std 3:* Ieri sera [mi sono] divertito un sacco.
   Yesterday I really enjoyed myself.

3. *T:* Di nuovo, per piacere.
   Again please.

4. *Std 3:* Ieri sera mi sono divertito un sacco.
   Yesterday I enjoyed myself enormously.

5. *T:* Mi sono? - Mi sono divertita. *(The teacher goes on to explain, in English, that the past participle 'divertito', has to be changed to 'divertita', to agree with the subject of the sentence, who is female)* Ti sei divertita? Ti sei divertita?
   Enjoyed.   Enjoyed myself… Did you enjoy yourself?   Did you enjoy yourself?

6. *Std 3:* Si.
   Yes.

7. *T:* Perchè ti sei divertita? Che cosa hai fatto di bello ieri sera? Sei andata al cinema? Hai visto – hai visto un bel film, un bel film?
   Why did you enjoy yourself? What interesting thing did you do yesterday evening. Did you go to see a film. Did you see – a nice film, a nice film.

8. *Std 3:* Ho visto un bel film.
   I saw a nice film.

9. *T: (Writes on board)* Ho visto un bel film. *(To class)* State attenti! é perchè ho visto un bel film. *(To std)* Alla televisione o al cinema? Alla televisione o al cinema? *(To another student)* Per piacere, ripeti la frase di Student 3 come esempio di una frase. Ieri sera – *(Seems that student is not able to repeat the sentence.)* Student 3, detta.
   I saw a nice film…. Pay attention! It's because I say a nice film. …On television or at the cinema? ... Please repeat the sentence Student 3 as an example of a sentence.

10. *Std 3:* Ieri sera mi sono divertita un sacco.
   Yesterday I enjoyed myself enormously.

<div align="right">*(Nardoo Secondary)*</div>

The first four turns of this excerpt and the last two (turns 9 - 10) are not meaning-focused, as they involve reading and repetition of text. The student's error in turn 2 is attended to in the first part of turn 5 by a recast. The second part of turn 5 is meaning-focused and so are turns 6-8. Interestingly, the teacher's implicit focus on form in turn 5, in response to the student's error in turns 2 and 4, seems to have been effective as the student incorporates the correction in turn 10.

Listening to and/or reading L2 texts and discussing responses to them were tasks carried out in most classes, but were conducted differently in the primary and secondary classes. In two of the primary school classes studied, pairs or small groups worked on responses to L2 questions about a text and the teacher reviewed each group's responses in turn. In this T-SG context, the teachers' questions and students' responses were mainly in L2 and tended to be meaning-focused as can be seen in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 8

1. *T:* Numero tre *(names student to read the question).*
   Number three.

2. *Std 3:* Perchè si chiama Fire, il drago?
   Why is the dragon called Fire?

3. *T:* Perchè si chiama Fire, il drago? Perchè -
   Why is the dragon called Fire? Why?

4. *Std 3:* Perchè fire *(pronounced as an Italian word)* dalla bocca e naso
   (indecipherable). *(Teacher turns away to attend to another group and the
   student repeats the answer, possibly using the reading passage to help.)*
   Perchè, perchè fire dalla bocca e naso quando in [cava.]
   *Because 'fire' from mouth and nose. Because 'fire' from mouth and nose in
   cave.*

5. *T: (turns back to the group and repeats the question, having missed the
   student's response)* Perchè si chiama Fire, il drago? Perchè fuo – perchè –
   perchè fuoco - ?
   Why is the dragon called Fire? Because fi – because fire - ?

6. *Std 3:* Fuoco esce dalla bocca e il naso quando in cava.
   fire comes from his mouth and nose when in cave.

7. *T:* O, eccellente!
   Oh, excellent!

<div align="right">*(Pittosporum Primary)*</div>

In the secondary classes, students typically read L2 texts, and then answered oral or written questions about the text in English. These responses were also discussed in English, with the focus being on 'getting the right answer'. Reading of texts was sometimes preceded by pre-reading discussion or questions, which were usually in L1, as was the subsequent review of responses.

The use of meaning-focused learner-learner interaction tasks varied across the classes, but was more characteristic of the secondary than the primary classes. Joint construction of texts and information gap tasks were used more often than the other tasks, especially in the secondary classes. Surveys, Jigsaw activities and games each featured in a lesson in a secondary class.

As discussed at the beginning of this section, meaning-focused tasks involving peer interaction in L2 such as information-gap, survey and Jigsaw tasks usually targeted a specific language feature for practice and were thus 'focused communicative tasks' (Ellis, 2001). Examples are provided from a two-way information gap task and a joint construction of text task. In excerpt 9, the learners doing the information gap task are supported by targeted vocabulary and structures provided on a worksheet. However, the nature of the task also forces them to draw on their own linguistic repertoire related to the topic in order to produce their output:

Excerpt 9

1. *Std 1:* Bonjour.
   Good morning.

2. *Std 2:* Est-ce qu'il y a – what are they [indecipherable]. Ok, um - est-ce qu'il y a - cusine, cuisine?
   Is there …is there kitchen, kitchen?

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3. *Std 1:* cuisine [indecipherable]

4. *Std 2:* Est-ce qu'il y a [cuisine]

5. *Std 1:* C'est au premier étage.
   It's on the first floor.

6. *Std 2:* Merci. C'est ouvert quand?
   Thank you. When is it open?

7. *Std 1:* C'est ouvré à sept, sept heures, à vingt et un heures.
   It's open from seven, seven am, to nine pm
   .
8. *Std 2:* OK. -.Merci.

<div align="right">*(Eremophila Secondary)*</div>

Excerpt 10 is taken from a task where students were compiling questions to ask an exchange student who will visit the class in the near future. The collaborative dialogue that ensues focuses on an exploration of and reflection on language form:

Excerpt 10

1. *Std 3:* Cosa mangi?
   What do you eat?

2. *Std 2:* Cosa -
   What –

3. *Std 1:* Cosa mangia?
   What does he eat?

4. *Std 2:* What do you like to eat? Ti piace mangia – mangiamo? Ti piace mangiamo – oh – what's after mangiare?-
   Do you like he eat – we eat. Do you like we eat ... to eat?

5. *Std 1:* Ti piace. Ti piace. Do you like? Do you like?

6. *Std 2:* Quali -? Quali - something
   Which - ? Which –

7. *Std 3:* Is it, ti piace mangiare?
   ...do you like to eat?

<div align="right">*(Danthonia Secondary)*</div>

The students are initially uncertain about how to structure the question, 'What do you like to eat?' (turns 1-3). They don't know that the verb 'mangiare' should be in the infinitive

<div align="center">119</div>

after the structure 'ti piace ~' (turn 4) and try to use various conjugations. Through the process of experimentation and discussion, Student 2 finds the right form in the last turn.

4.3.4 Content

As noted above, the LOTE classes studied provide few opportunities for exchanges and tasks that focus on *content* in the conventional sense. Teacher-class interaction with a content focus in these classes usually occurred as part of tasks concerned with the presentation and discussion of L2 culture. Learner-learner interaction with this focus included comprehension tasks where learners answered questions in L1 about aspects of L2 culture from information provided in an L2 text.

In T-C interaction, exchanges focusing on aspects of the L2 culture often emerged from other tasks, as teachers dealt with queries or illustrated points they considered significant. The following extract occurred when the teacher was assigning parts for a restaurant role play and was centred on a discussion of the word 'apéritif'. As was often the case in other classes, during the exchange the teacher reverted to English to explore this issue.

> *Excerpt 11*
>
> 1. *T:* What kind of an appetiser?
>
> 2. *Std O:* Umm?
>
> 3. *T:* What kind of an appetiser? Like chips or -?
>
> 4. *Std O:* Yeh, like nibblies.
>
> 5. *T:* I see. It's actually a drink. Apéritif   Un apéritif *(writes word on board)* - is a very European habit. Before a meal you might have an apéritif. It basically opens the appetite. You'll find the stem (underlines apér) refers to open. Apéritif, it opens the appetite. These days in Australia you more often have appetisers. Un apéritif, it doesn't have to be alcohol, but very often it is a sort of alcoholic drink. The appetisers you're talking about, the French call them 'les amuse-gueules'. 'Gueules' the best English equivalent would be 'gob'. Little things that are for putting in your mouth, 'les amuse-gueules'
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

Most topics dealt with in the lessons observed had a cultural dimension and cultural content was often dealt with implicitly rather than explicitly. A lesson in the French class

at Sassafras Secondary combined both elements by featuring a video on the chateaux of the Loire and using whole class and small group aural and written tasks to promote comprehension.

4.4 Language choices

A significant characteristic of LOTE classes is that teachers and students have L1, the language of instruction and of everyday communication, in common. For the learning and teaching of a second language in the classroom context, this is a resource and a source of tension. For both the learner and teacher, it is a resource because the L1 is necessarily the launching pad for the linguistic, cultural and intercultural learning that second language instruction offers. On the other hand, the shared L1 removes one of the most powerful motivations for L2 use for teacher and learner alike - communicative need. As has been demonstrated in the literature review, conventional LOTE classes are sites where L1 often features significantly in the teaching-learning process. The reasons for this are various and complex and possibly related to the historical development of teaching languages. This reliance on L1 can be problematic for T-C and T-SG interaction, as the teacher is usually the primary source of L2 input and the role model for output for students. The issue is a different one for L-L interaction, as learners' language development encompasses a succession of interlanguages in which the L1 features and which often reflect L1 influences. Moreover, in the early stages of learning, L1 is an important learning and strategic tool.

4.4.1 Teachers' language choices

Research studies point to varying but usually low levels of L2 use by teachers in both university and school learning contexts (Calman & Daniel, 1998; Crawford, 2002; Duff & Polio, 1990; Kim & Elder, 2005; Macaro, 1997; Polio & Duff, 1994; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002;). Use of the L2 is in itself no guarantee of the quality of the discourse, as Mangubhai (1999) has pointed out. However, quantity is an important consideration in conventional LOTE classes, as learners may not have consistent access to other sources of L2 input. Teacher-class interaction, which was the most prevalent and most readily quantifiable, was therefore analyzed to estimate how much occurred mainly in L2, in L1

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and in a mixture of L2 and L1. 'Mainly L2' was defined as use of L2 80% or more of the time. 'Mainly L1' was defined as use of L1 80% or more of the time and a 'mixture of L2 and L1' involved roughly equivalent time using each code. A global profile of teachers' language choices in T-C interaction for each class studied is presented in Table 4.3. As use of the different codes varied within lessons for each class as well as over the five lessons observed, a percentage range is given, as well as the mean percentage for five lessons.

Table 4.3 shows that the percentage of time T-C interaction occurred mainly in L2 ranged from medium to very low – between 41%-49% of the time in three classes[5] and between than 4% -30% of the time in six of them. The intermixing of L2 and L1 in T-C interaction was a significant feature of interaction in all classes. It was the dominant mode of language use in four secondary classes (Nardoo, Orania, Danthonia and Eremopholia), was more prevalent than L2 use in Acanthus Secondary and was almost in equal proportions to L2 use in Pittosporum Primary. In the four remaining classes, T-C interaction that featured the mixture of L2 and L1 took place between 15%-33% of the time. The proportion of T-C interaction conducted mainly in the L1 was at its highest (62%) in the French class at Correa Primary, but also significant in the Italian classes at Acanthus and Nardoo Secondary and Wilga Primary where it occurred between 35%-38% of the time.

There was considerable variation between the classes for all three categories of language choice. This variation was especially notable for predominant use of L2, which ranged from 4% in the Italian class at Danthonia Secondary to 49% in French class at Sassafras Secondary. The percentage of mainly L2 use in T-C interaction was higher overall in the primary classes than in the secondary classes, even excluding Hibbertia Primary. A possible reason for this is that lessons giving explicit instruction of L2 grammar and conducted mainly in L1 featured in all the secondary classes, but not in the primary classes. Another reason may be that comprehension type activities around L2 texts in the secondary classes generally involved whole class groups and were usually conducted in

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[5] This discussion excludes Hibbertia Primary because of the predominance of T-SG interaction in that class.

L1. In the primary classes the teacher worked with small groups and tended to use L2 to explore aspects of the text, rather than focus on comprehension questions in L1. However, this seemingly higher level of L2 use by teachers in primary school classes needs to be offset against the greater weekly time allocation in all the secondary school classes, but especially in the two non-government secondary schools - Eremophila and Danthonia Secondary. Thus, a relatively high level of L1 use by teachers in the secondary school classes may impact less on learners than a similar level in primary school classes because the total amount of L2 use is also going to be proportionally higher as well because of the greater time allocation.

Table 4.3: L1 and L2 use in T-C interaction over five lessons

School/Class	Mainly L2		L2 and L1		Mainly L1	
	% Range	% Mean	% Range	% Mean	% Range	% Mean
Correa Yr 6/7 French	0-51	20	4-48	22	39-92	62
Hibbertia * Yr 7 French	N/A	80*	N/A	15*	N/A	5*
Pittosporum Yr 6 Italian	12-68	46	9-79	43	0-23	11
Wilga Yr 6 Italian	16-75	41	0-100	23	0-84	36
Eremophila Yr 10 French	0-65	30	7-100	42	0-55	28
Orania Yr 10 French	4-31	14	15-89	58	4-81	28
Sassafras Yr 10 French	28-74	49	4-67	33	0-39	18
Acanthus Yr 10 Italian	14-34	25	8-63	37	14-56	38
Danthonia Yr 10 Italian	3-18	4	39-91	74	9-43	22
Nardoo Yr 10 Italian	2-27	14	27-69	51	5-61	35

*As students were working on self-access tasks in this class, most teacher-learner interaction was T-SG interaction and the figures refer to this participation structure. T-C interactions occurred mainly as part of classroom management at the beginning and end of lessons and tended to include higher amounts of L1 than T-SG interaction. Because of the individual nature T-SG interaction and the limitations of the recording equipment, it was not possible to estimate range of use for each category over the five lessons.

Of note is the fact that in the four classes where the proportion of T-C was at its highest (Correa Primary and Danthonia, Orania and Nardoo Secondary) and occupied between

75% -85% of the time, the amount of interaction occurring in L2 was at its lowest (between 4%-20%). The nature of the activities being undertaken and the length of T-C interaction sessions possibly account for this. In the French classes in Correa Primary and Orania Secondary, the explanation of an assessment task and discussion of issues related to it in L1 occupied all or almost all of a particular lesson. Extended explanations of L2 grammar conducted mainly in L1 occurred in the Danthonia and Nardoo classes. The length of time spent on T-C affects both learners and teachers. The lengthier the period of T-C interaction, the more tired students are likely to become and their capacity to effectively process L2 input diminishes. Teachers, in turn, may intuitively respond to such a situation by switching to L1. Communicating in another language with speakers who have a low level of proficiency also takes a lot of effort and teachers, as well as students, may be more likely to 'default' to L1 in the longer the T-C interactions, even if they are native speakers (as was the case for at least one of the teachers in the four classes listed above).

The findings presented in Table 4.3 are similar to those of Crawford (2002), whose self-report study involved a large number Australian primary and secondary teachers, and Kim and Elder (2005), who found that L2 use among seven native speaker secondary school teachers ranged from 23%-88%. In contrast, a study of five secondary teachers of French by Martin and Mitchell (1997) found that the three most experienced teachers used L2 more than 90% of the time, while the other two used it between 37%- 60% of the time, suggesting that length of teacher experience may be of significance. However, this was not linked to greater L2 use by the teachers in this study.

To supplement the global profile of teachers' language choices, these choices in relation to exchanges tasks are presented Table 4.4. Table 4.4 shows that L2 use by teachers tended to be confined to those exchanges and tasks that did not require extended, unpredictable or more complex use of language (1, 2, 4, 8, 12, and 16). Exchanges and tasks in which a mixture of L2 and L1 were used (2, 11, 13-17) sometimes began in L2 and a problem with learner comprehension or the complexity of the explanation or the task triggered the change to L2. This was usually the case with classroom discipline where brief and routine

requests were carried out in L2, while anything perceived as a more serious breach of discipline was addressed in L1. There was also individual variation between teachers. For example, the teacher from Sassafras Secondary used mainly L2 to introduce and explain the future tense, whereas three other secondary teachers who also presented this grammar item used mainly L1. That teacher and the teacher from Nardoo Secondary often explained points of grammar and cultural items that that emerged incidentally during lessons in L2, while the others almost always used L1. The teacher from Sassafras Secondary also presented a lesson that focused on aspects of the L2 culture mainly in L2.

Table 4.4: Language choices in T-C interaction by exchanges and tasks

Instructional focus	Exchanges and tasks	Language choices*
Management	1. Greetings, leave-takings, positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviours	L2
	2. Classroom discipline	L1 & L2
	3. Acknowledgement, praise, encouragement for L2 use	L2
	4. Turn taking	L1 & L2
	5. Explanation/organisation/monitoring of tasks	L1
	6. Distribution/collection of materials or equipment	L1
	7. Other e.g., explaining excursions.	L1
Form	8. Q/A drills, pattern practice	L2
	9. Incidental review/instruction on L2 form, including metalinguistic commentary, in context	L1 & L2
	10. Formal instruction on an aspect of the L2 grammar	L1
	11. Games focusing on practice of vocabulary/grammar.	L1 & L2
Meaning	12. Q/A 'conversations' – exchanging personal information or opinions on a topic	L2
	13. Brainstorms, pooling of ideas	L1 & L2
	14. Informal exchanges in the L2 between teacher and learner	L2
	15. Review/discussion of learner generated texts	L1 & L2
	16. Reviewing/discussing responses to L2 text (aural or written).	L1 (secondary) L1 & L2 (primary)
Content	17. Presentation and discussion of aspects of L2 culture.	L1 & L2

*The overall classification of exchanges and tasks as conducted in L1, L2 or a mixture of both was a judgment made by the researcher on the basis of the detailed overview of each the lessons observed (see Appendix 12) and the lesson transcripts.

4.4.1.1 Quality of teacher L2 discourse

An examination of the length and relative complexity of teachers' utterances shows considerable variation in the quality of L2 discourse between teachers. Examples from two French classes illustrate this point. Both are extracts from introductions to a lesson. Both involve the teacher reviewing material already covered as a means of revision, but also as a starting point for the next phase of the lesson. Both are characteristic of the teacher's level of discourse in the L2 in most the lessons observed. The first excerpt illustrates the restricted type of discourse that occurs in some foreign language classes:

> *Excerpt 12*
>
> 1. *T: Ok.* Qui me peut dire en anglais, quelle heure est-il quand je dis le temps? Six heures trente.
>   *Who can tell me in English what time I'm saying? Six thirty.*
>
> 2. *Std 1:* 6.30
>
> 3. *T:* Merci beaucoup. 6.30. Treize heures un.
>   *Thank you very much. Thirteen hours and one minute.*
>
> 4. *Std 2:* 1.01 pm.
> 5. *T:* Neuf heures trente-sept.
>
> 6. *Std 3:* 9.37
>
> 7. *T:* Merci beaucoup.
>
> *(Orania Secondary)*

Apart from the stilted question in turn 1 with its rather strange use of 'le temps' instead of 'l'heure', the L2 generated by the teacher in turns 3, 5 and 7 consists of words and brief phrases in L2 which requires a response in L1 from the learner. This is typical of the discourse associated with drills and other kind of language practice. However, the teacher's discourse remained very similar to this, even when activities were more meaning-focused.

In except 13, on the other hand, the teacher offers students input that has some linguistic richness in terms of syntax and vocabulary (turns 1 and 3) and tries to make it accessible to learners through the use of repetition, paraphrasing and examples. She also creates an expectation that students will respond in L2:

Excerpt 13

1. *T:* D'abord, les repas. Quels sont les repas? *(Writes on board)* – Les repas du jour. Par exemple, à sept heures on mange le yaourt, le fruit, le toast avec de la confiture. Ça s'appelle comment? Ça s'appelle comment ce repas – qu'on mange à sept heures? Ça s'appelle comment? *(Names a student?)*
   To begin with, meals. What the meals of the day – The meals of the day. For example, at seven in the morning we eat yogurt, fruit, toast with jam. What's that called? What's that meal called that we eat at seven in the morning? What's that called?

2. *Std:* Le petit déjeuner.
   Breakfast.

3. *T:* Absolument! Le petit déjeuner. *(Writing on the board.)* Tu te rappelles *(names a student)*? Tu te souviens bien? Oui? Qu'est-ce que tu as mangé ce matin pour le petit déjeuner ?
   Absolutely. Breakfast. Do you recall ...? Do you remember? Yes? What did you have this morning for breakfast?

4. *Std A:* um - le petit déjeuner - um

5. *T:* Qu'est-ce que tu as mangé?

6. *Std A:* um - cereal - le céréale

7. *T:* La céréale. Bon. Quel genre de céréale?
   Cereal. Good. What kind of cereal?

8. *Std A:* Oh, crunchy nut cornflakes*. (Laughter)*
                                                      (Sassafras Secondary)

These two examples represent the extremes and the other teachers were at various points along this continuum. The teacher from Sassafras Secondary was one of two native speakers in the group. Her language proficiency would obviously have made it easy for her to choose an appropriate level of language. However, the effectiveness of her discourse in terms of interaction with her learners was crucially dependent on how she presented the input and opportunities she provided for students to respond and create their own output. The other native speaker, a secondary teacher of Italian, also provided very substantial slabs of L2 input. However, she provided few opportunities for interaction that enabled learners to generate comprehensible output and thus potentially contribute to their own learning.

Analysis of teachers' language choices revealed that a combination of L2 and L1 in T-C interaction was the characteristic mode of language use in most of the classes. It also highlighted a considerable reliance on L1 by teachers in several of the classes. This is a matter for concern, as the need for L2 input in language learning is undisputed. Language use varied across exchanges and tasks, with context influencing the nature of the input and interaction that occurred. Thus exchanges and tasks with a management, form and content focus were carried out either mainly in L1 or mainly in L2 and those with a meaning focus were more likely to involve a combination of L2 and L1. The quality of teacher L2 discourse also varied from the restricted to the more extended and linguistically rich.

4.4.2 Learners' language choices

The proficiency level of the majority of learners in this study was quite limited. Most primary school learners had participated in at least 120 hours of instruction in their L2, while the majority of their secondary counterparts had had a minimum of about 200 hours. This meant that most students could make brief responses in L2 to teacher generated questions and could 'use' L2 fairly confidently in student-student tasks that relied on recycling and recombining chunks of language that has already been learned. In tasks that required more spontaneous use of language, most students relied heavily on L1 to facilitate communication and to expedite the task.

A picture of the learners' language choices for the various exchanges and tasks is provided in Table 4.5. Table 4.5 shows that management and content focused exchanges and tasks were carried out mostly in L1, form-focused exchanges and tasks mainly in L2 and meaning-focused exchanges and tasks predominantly in a mixture of L2 and L1. Exchanges and tasks whose instructional focus was form (6 – 9) made very limited and predictable linguistic demands on learners (even though appearing to concentrate on meaning, as with surveys) and thus made it easy for them to use L2. The use of both L1 and L2 in the meaning-focused tasks would appear to be related to the relatively low level of learner proficiency and the less predictable linguistic demands of these tasks. Whether students used a mixture of L1 and L2 or were able to sustain more extended L2 use also depended on the task itself and the students' own capacities. For example, the one-way

information gap task undertaken by a pair at Hibbertia Primary was both extremely simple and linguistically very predictable and, after some initial assistance from the teacher, the pair was able to carry out the task mainly in L2. In contrast, most learners used a mixture of L1 and L2 in two-way information gap tasks, even though they were given vocabulary support through worksheets provided by the teacher. There were, however, also a few who used mainly L2 to complete these tasks.

Table 4.5: Language choices in L-L interaction by exchanges and tasks

Instructional focus	Exchanges and tasks	Language choices*
Management	1. Clarification of task 2. Assigning roles 3. Turn taking 4. Seeking/giving help 5. Personal and interpersonal exchanges	L1
Form	6. Drills, pattern practice, Q/A rehearsing L2 form	L2
	7. Presentations and performances including role plays based on a model dialogue	L2
	8. Surveys	L2
	9. Completing written exercises on L2 form	L1 & L2
Meaning	10. Information gap tasks 11. Jigsaw activities	
	12. Joint construction of texts for role plays, debates etc.	L1 & L2
	13. Games requiring some skill or interpretation	
Content	14. Answering questions about aspects of L2 culture from information provided in an L2 text	L1

*The overall classification of exchanges and tasks as conducted in L1, L2 or a mixture of both was a judgment made by the researcher on the basis of the transcripts of L-L interaction.

The nature of learners' language choices in form and meaning-focused tasks is illustrated in the next two excerpts. The first excerpt shows a pair 'using' L2 in a role play based on a model provided by the teacher. This type of activity has a 'communicative' flavour but its main focus is practice of particular structures and vocabulary:

> *Excerpt 14*
>
> 1. *Std S:* Ok, we'll start again. Qu'est-ce que vous désirez?
>   *... What would you like?*

2. *Std C:* Bon comme hors-d'oeuvres *(mispronounced)* je voudrais une melon s'il vous plaît. *(reading from the sample dialogue.)*
   Good, I'd like a melon as a starter, please

3. *Std S: (makes an exasperated noise).* When you say it, instead of 'melon' you would put something like 'soupe de ognion'

4. *Std C:* Oh, I see. - Bon comme hors-d'oeuvres je voudrais, je voudrais, - escargots à l'aïl.*(mispronounced)*
   … Good, as a starter I'd like, I'd like garlic snails.

5. *Std S:* Ok I have to ask about the main course. OK. Et comme plat principal. *(mispronounced)* - Alright, I've got to write this down. - OK. Et comme plat prinicipal?
   …And for the main course… And for the main course?

6. *Std C:* Err – je vais prendre - je vais prendre - la – la omelette ou champignons.
   I'll have – I'll have – omlette or mushrooms

7. *Std S:* Is that omelette?

8. *Std C:* Yeh.

9. *Std S:* omelette – aux champignons
   Mushroom omlette.

10. *Std C:* Oui. - *(Std C seems unable to find place in dialogue.)* I'll show you.
    (Sassafras Secondary)

In this excerpt, the learners reproduce phrases and sentences involving 'je voudrais' that they have in the model dialogue on their worksheet and add their own choice of food item. L1 is used in turns 3, 5 and 10 to expedite the performance of the task and in turns 7 and 8 to check on the meaning of 'omelette'.

The demands of a two-way information gap task in which the emphasis is more on exchange of information results in interaction that has a different balance between L2 and L1, as the next excerpt shows:

Excerpt 15
1. *Std A:* Est-ce que il y a une - cuisine?
   Is there a kitchen here?

2. *Std B:* Umm - la cuisine - est –chez le - premier étage.
   ...the kitchen - is – on - the first floor.

3. *Std A:* Umm, umm - une peut – on peut
   ... (ungrammatical) – can one

4. *Std B:* What did you say?

5. *Std A:* on peut?
   can one?

6. *Std B:* I don't know what you're actually doing.

7. *Std A:* I don't know. Umm *(Laughs)* - Is this all right?

8. *Std B:* You have to say, what time is it open till.

9. *Std A:* Yeh, I say, au premier étage.
   ... on the first floor.

10. *Std B:* Oui.   (indecipherable), s'il vous plaît? -
    Yes. ...please?

11. *Std A:* Ok. - So that was -

12. *Std B:* C'est ouvert? -
    Is it open?

13. *Std A:* Oui - tous les jours – et – [sept heures] – a vingt-et-un heures du soir.
    Yes – every day – and – seven am – to nine pm.
    (Eremophila Secondary)

In this excerpt the learners use a mixture of L2 and L1, with the latter predominating. Characteristically, L1 is used to deal with the communication problem (turn 4) as well as for task management (turns 6-8). The learners' L2 production, apart from the first sentence which is likely to have been rote-learned, is limited to brief noun phrases or verb phrases. This contrasts with the full sentences produced by the pair in the previous excerpt.

Several issues are highlighted by the above examples of L-L interaction and the information about learners' language choices in particular exchanges and tasks. The first is the potential for learning provided by tasks based on structured practice and the

memorisation of material vis-à-vis those that provide opportunities for negotiated interaction. The second is the role of L1 in L2 learning. The first will be examined in the subsequent chapters and therefore is not discussed here. The second is considered briefly. The fact that L1 supports L2 learning has been established by a number of research studies (e.g., Anton & DiCamilla, 1998; Brooks, Donato & McGlone, 1997; Cummins, 1993; Cohen; 1994; Blanco-Iglesias, Broner & Tarone, 1995; Platt & Brooks, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Of particular relevance here are the findings of the Swain and Lapkin study involving learners in immersion classes, which indicated that learners' use of English "served important cognitive and social functions" (p.268) and could contribute to L2 learning. The issue for Swain and Lapkin (p.268) was not that L1 would be used, but that L1 "may substitute for, rather than support second language learning." This matter has even greater resonance for conventional LOTE classes, where limited time, the very gradual development of proficiency and the *language-as-object* focus of programs, among other things, make reliance on L1 by learners even more likely. There is a need for research that helps to develop a clearer understanding of when L1 use becomes a substitute rather than a support for L2 learning.

4.5 Discourse structure

The literature review demonstrated that Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) pattern is a common discourse pattern in second language learning classrooms in teacher-fronted interaction. Hall and Walsh (2002) argued for the existence of two versions of the IRF - a restricted version (henceforth termed IRF1) and an expanded version (henceforth termed IRF2). They identified the nature of the teacher's response in the third turn of the IRF sequence as the crucial factor in determining the extent to which the structure constrained or facilitated language development. van Lier (1996) has also argued for a re-evaluation of the IRF, pointing out that it is a mode of discourse designed for instruction that has advantages as well as disadvantages. He too acknowledged that a number of its defining characteristics can constrain rather than facilitate language development. These characteristics include control of the discourse by the teacher, the closed, display nature of the initiating question and feedback that is evaluative and usually signals a closing of the exchange. On the other hand, the IRF can also be used to facilitate the learner's

contribution if questions are framed to make the response easy and predictable and thus scaffold interaction. While acknowledging that the IRF is a closed rather than open discourse format and that its advantages are more likely to apply if learners are given opportunities to go beyond the restrictive pattern, van Lier (1996, p.152) also makes the point that "the IRF is not an invariant, monolithic questioning procedure that has only one form and one function." He demonstrates differences in conduct (general, unspecified elicitation versus specific personal elicitation), function (repetition, recitation, cognition and expression) and pedagogical orientation (display and assessment versus participation) and argues for a need to explore different types of IRF in order to tap the real, if limited, advantages it affords learners.

An examination of the interaction data indicated that teacher-class interaction in the ten classes studied was often based on the IRF discourse structure. Analysis supported the notion of a restricted form (IRF1) and an expanded form (IRF2) and the usefulness of van Lier's (1996) categories of conduct, function and pedagogical orientation in establishing the difference between the two versions in terms of advantages or disadvantages for the learner. Several examples of the two versions of the IRF are now examined and the characteristics that potentially constrain or facilitate language learning are discussed.

Three sequences based on the IRF1 structure are contained in excerpt 16. The excerpt is taken from an activity at the beginning of a lesson that aimed to revise the negative form of the passé composé, in other words, the purpose of which was mainly display and assessment:

> *Excerpt 16*
> 1. *T: … (Names a student.)* Qu'est-ce que tu n'as pas fait?
>   *What didn't you do?*
>
> 2. *Std 3:* Je n'ai pas joué au hockey.
>   *I didn't play hockey.*
>
> 3. *T:* C'est parfait! Je n'ai pas joué au hockey. *(Names another student.)*
>   *Perfect! I didn't play hockey.*
>
> 4. *Std 4:* Je n'ai - je n'ai pas vu l'école.
>   *I didn't –I didn't see the school.*

5. *T:* Je n'ai pas vu l'école. C'est ça. *(Names another student.)* Qu'est-ce que tu n'as pas fait?
   I didn't see the school. That's it.

6. *Std 5:* Je n'ai jamais regardé [Family Feud].
   I've never watched Family Feud.

7. *T: (Laughs)* You never watched Family Feud. D'accord. C'est ça. …

<center>*(Eremophila Secondary)*</center>

In this excerpt, each IRF1 sequence is between the teacher and a different student. The teacher elicits a personal response from students. However, the display purpose of the exchanges is emphasised by the fact that, as the question is identical for each student, the teacher does not always repeat it, but just names the next student who is to respond. The function of the interaction is a mixture of recitation and cognition. The feedback provided by the teacher is repetition of each student's correct response and reinforcement. Following this feedback the teacher addresses herself to the next student, thus restricting each student's output to one turn. The activity from which this excerpt was taken lasted more than five minutes and over the entire activity several exchanges that reflected the IRF2 structure also occurred, usually stimulated by a linguistic or communication problem. However, most of the interaction was based on the IRF1 structure.

The same IRF1 structure is evident in the interaction between the teacher and Student 1 in excerpt 17, taken from an activity where students were practising the structure, 'Il mio drago è ~' and completing it by adding an adjective:

> *Excerpt 17*
> 1. *T:* Adesso io ti passo un drago. Tu mi devi descrivere il tuo. Prendi! Prima io faccio. Faccio - 'Il mio drago è grandissimo.' That's my description. *(The teacher passes the dragon figure to a student.)* Il mio drago è - *(Waits for student to repeat and complete.)* Il mio drago è - Choose an adjective. *Now I'll pass you the dragon. You have to describe yours. Take [it]. I'll do it first. I'll do. 'My dragon is very big.' My dragon is - … My dragon is -*
>
> 2. *Std 1:* corto
>   *Short*
>
> 3. *T:* È corto. Grazie. Ok pass it on. Il mio drago è -
>   *It's short. Thank you. …*

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4. *Std 2:* Il mio drago è -
   My dragon is –

5. *T:* You can make up colours.

6. *Std 2:* Il mio drago è -   *(someone calls out 'bravo')* -bravo.
   My dragon is – good.

7. *T:* Pass it on. *(Referring the card with the picture of the dragon on it.)*
   (Pittosporum Primary)

Interestingly, the interaction between the teacher and Student 2 in turns 3-6 moves towards an IRF2 structure, stimulated by the inability of Student 2 to complete the model sentence (turn 4). The teacher's feedback (in L1) and a bit of assistance from a fellow student enable Student 2 to provide the required response (turn 6). The teacher closes the interaction with Student 2 by requesting the picture stimulus be passed on to another student (turn 7).

The final two excerpts illustrate the IRF2 structure, but also highlight qualitative differences that can occur in the use of this structure. Excerpt 18 is an extended exchange between the teacher and Student 3:

Excerpt 18
1. *T:* Che cosa indossa?
   What's she wearing?

2. *Std 3:* Scarpe.
   Shoes.

3. *T:* Di che colore?
   What colour?

4. *Std 3:* Nere.
   Black.

5. *T:* Bene. Che cos'altro?
   What else?

6. *Std 3:* Calze.
   Socks.

7. *T:* Calze. Di che colore?
   Socks. What colour?

8. *Std 3:* Bianche.
   White.

9. *T:* Bianche. Bravissima. *(Names another student.)*
   White. Very good.
                    (Wilga Primary)

Teacher feedback in turns 3, 5 and 7 provides opportunities for further interaction rather than closing the exchange. However, as the function of the questions used by the teacher in turns 3, 5 and 7 is largely recitation and their underlying purpose display, the main advantage offered by the IRF2 structure in this instance is extension of the interaction beyond the three turns characteristic of the IRF1.

The advantages offered by the IRF2 structure when it combines personal elicitation, cognition and expression and participation is illustrated in the next excerpt. This comes from a warm-up Q/A conversation session at the beginning of a lesson where the questions are open-ended rather than closed as in the previous excerpt:

Excerpt 19
1. *T:* Come stai oggi, A?
   How are you today, A?

2. *Std A:* Ho fame.
   I'm hungry.

3. *T:* Ho fame! Non hai mangiato per la colazione?
   I'm hungry! Didn't you have breakfast?

4. *Std A:* No.

5. *T:* *(To someone else in the class)* Occhi a me! - *(addressing Student A again)* No! Perchè? - Sei troppo contenta del compleanno di ieri? - *(No response from the student.)*   Sei troppo contenta del compleanno di ieri?
   Look this way! ...Why? Are you too happy about your birthday yesterday?
   ...
6. *Std A:* What did you say?

7. *T:* Sei troppo contenta - del compleanno di ieri? Sei - troppo contenta - del compleanno - di ieri? *(The question is repeated very slowly and accompanied by animated non-verbal signals)*
   Are you too happy about your birthday yesterday? Are - you too happy - about your birthday - yesterday?

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8. *Std A:* Troppo contenta.
    too happy

9. *T:* Si! Ooo – e che cosa mangi per pranzo oggi?
    Yes!... and what are you going to eat for lunch today?

10. *Std A:* Niente
    Nothing.

11. *T:* Niente. Perché? Non hai moneta?
    Nothing. Why? Don't you have any money

12. *Std A: (The student nods.)*

13. *T:* O, poverina!...
    O, you poor thing!

                                             (Acanthus Secondary)

Excerpt 19, like the previous excerpt, is an extended exchange between the teacher and the same student, that is involving personal rather than general elicitation It demonstrates how the teacher's feedback in turns 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 encourages or requires a response from the student, thus setting up a cycle of interaction. In turns 3, 5 and 11, the teacher repeats the student's reply in the previous turn, but probes with a follow-up question in turn 3 and 'Perchè?' and then another question in turns 5 and 11. Turn 9 also contains a follow-up question, preceded by reinforcement. In turn 7, the teacher reiterates the question posed in turn 5, but at a slower pace and with non-verbal cues.

As noted above, the IRF1 and IRF2 structures co-occurred in extended activities and the prevalence of each in interaction in the ten classes varied. This variation appeared to depend on a number of factors. These included the teachers' pedagogical style, their knowledge and beliefs, the activities and tasks teachers employed and their language choices. For example, the fact that most T-C interaction in Orania Secondary reflected the IRF1 discourse structure appeared to be linked to the teacher's limited concept of interaction[6], her use of tasks that were predominantly closed and display-oriented and her very restricted use of L2. In contrast, the teacher from Sassafras Secondary demonstrated a concept of interaction that appeared to more closely reflect the current literature,

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[6] Teachers' perceptions of interaction are discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

employed tasks that tended to be open-ended and meaning-oriented and used L2 frequently and with confidence.

4.6 Summary and discussion

This chapter has addressed the first research question. It has described the nature of the interaction occurring in the languages classes studied in terms of the participation structures available to learners, the typical exchanges and tasks used, the language choices made by teachers and learners and the discourse structure underlying teacher-fronted interaction. It has shown that interaction occurred through several participation structures, but most commonly T-C and L-L interaction, with the former predominating in most classes. A range of exchanges and tasks was used in the classes for both T-C and L-L interaction. These exchanges and tasks had four main instructional focus areas: management, form, meaning and content. Teacher-class and learner-learner interaction included exchanges and tasks for all four areas. Analysis of teachers' language choices revealed a medium to low level of L2 use by most teachers and considerable use of L1 or a mixture of L2 and L1 by majority. Use of L2 tended to be confined to tasks and exchanges that required less complex language. Predictably, learners relied heavily on L1 in their interaction and were most likely to use mainly L2 in activities that focused on form and that required them to use or recycle well rehearsed chunks of language. Finally, the discourse structure of teacher-centred interaction generally followed the IRF pattern, but included an expanded (IRF2) as well restricted (IRF1) version. It was demonstrated that interaction involving the IRF2 discourse structure encouraged student participation through teacher feedback that provided ongoing opportunities for interaction.

The nature of the interaction in each of the ten classes studied involved the complex interplay of the four aspects examined separately in this chapter, namely participation structures, typology of exchanges and tasks, language choices and discourse structures. All four aspects are of importance in the interaction process and discussion about the significance of findings for any one of them needs to consider the influence of the others. In the context of this study, however, two seem particularly relevant: language choices,

especially those made by teachers; and, discourse structure. These two aspects impact crucially on three key areas of interaction: input, feedback and output.

In terms of the quantity as well as quality of the L2 input provided, the teachers in most of the classes studied, like those investigated by Crawford (2002) and Kim and Elder (2005), used L2 for fairly limited amounts of time. This is a matter of concern, as input is a necessary element in all second language learning and the relatively small amount of L2 available to learners is likely to have negative implications for their learning. However, unlike immersion or ESL contexts, where L2 use by teachers is determined by factors outside the teacher's control (an educational compact in the first instance and the fact that L2 is the dominant code and the language of the curriculum in the second), the level of L2 use by teachers in LOTE classes is influenced by a range of factors. While teachers' proficiency levels, experience, beliefs, pedagogical knowledge and function of interaction within the lesson (management, instruction, discipline etc.) all impact, research suggests that their influence varies from teacher to teacher and class to class. Of equal importance are the characteristics of the learners involved. It may be that the level of L2 use is something that needs to be continuously negotiated (overtly and/or covertly) between teachers and their learners, both collectively and individually. The pervasiveness of the mixing L2 and L1 in T-C interaction may, in part, be a consequence of this need for negotiation. It also points to the bilingual character of LOTE classes. This bilingual character is also strongly reflected in L-L interaction. The issues of L1 use in L-L interaction and the need to better understand the contribution of L1 to L2 learning in this context was discussed earlier in this chapter.

The characteristic discourse structure of T-C interaction is the IRF. This is hardly surprising as it is a mode of discourse designed for instruction (van Lier, 1998). What is of concern is the pervasiveness of the IRF1 in some of the classes studied. The extent to which teachers operate within the restricted IRF1 pattern affects the nature of the feedback they provide to learners, the opportunities learners have for extended participation in interaction and the nature of the output produced. All these have serious implications for learning, especially if combined with high levels of L1 use and exchanges and tasks that

are predominantly form rather than meaning-focused. These issues are examined in the next chapter which documents the feedback and interactional routines that characterise teacher-learner interaction.

CHAPTER 5
TEACHER-LEARNER INTERACTION

5.1. Introduction

Research into the role of interaction in second language acquisition has focused on the three key interactional processes: comprehensible input, feedback and modified output. These processes are closely inter-related; however, for the purposes of research they have often been studied separately. As this chapter reports on the types of feedback and interactional routines found in teacher-fronted exchanges the ten language classes investigated, it will address issues related to all three processes, while focusing, in particular, on the first two.

Long (1996) argued that comprehensible input is a necessary though not sufficient condition for second language acquisition to occur. At the same time, he identified patterns of interaction, especially between NSs and NNSs, which research evidence suggested were facilitative of acquisition. Negotiation for meaning, particularly if it involved interactional adjustments on the part of the NS or more competent conversational partner, was judged to be particularly important. As Pica (1994) and Gass and Varonis (1985) demonstrated, the type of feedback provided to learners through negotiated exchanges not only increased their comprehension of input, but also drew their attention to form and provided opportunities for them to modify their output to make it more target-like.

Long and Robinson (1998) classified the feedback provided as part of interaction as broadly of two types. The first type, 'positive evidence', provides the learner with language samples or models which show what is possible in the L2. 'Positive evidence' can be either authentic or modified. Furthermore, modified forms of positive evidence can be either simplified or elaborated. The second type of feedback gives the learner 'negative evidence' or information about what is *not* part of the L2. 'Negative evidence' can be pre-emptive, as when a learner is provided with grammar rules in advance, or reactive, as when a NS or more competent interlocutor responds to a learner's incorrect utterance.

Such a response can be *explicit,* as in overt correction of error, or *implicit*, as in a recast, which Long (1996, p.434) defines as "utterances that rephrase a child's utterance by changing one or more sentence components (subject, verb or object) while still referring to its central meanings".

While there is ongoing discussion and debate about the exact contribution these various types of feedback make to second language acquisition, there is a substantial body of research documenting their facilitative role in the acquisition process, with particular attention given, in recent years, to the role of implicit negative evidence (see Chapter 2: Literature Review).

5.2. Types of feedback and interactional routines

The types of feedback and interactional routines found to occur in the classes studied are the focus of this chapter. This section outlines the nature of the data examined and explains the framework used to analyse that data.

5.2.1 Data examined

Examination of the classroom data sought to identify the interactional features referred to above along with any other interactional features that emerged from the data itself. The data are drawn predominantly from participation structures involving the teacher and the whole class (T-C) interaction, but also include some interaction between the teacher and individuals or small groups of students (T-SG). For technical reasons, good data from T-SG were difficult to obtain because this type of interaction usually occurred when the rest of the class was engaged in interactive tasks and noise levels were high. An examination of the data showed that similar types of feedback and interactional routines were used in this participation structure as in T-C interaction. In T-SG interaction, however, students were more likely to initiate interaction by asking for help from the teacher, perhaps because students usually worked with friends and felt more relaxed about admitting gaps in their knowledge, but also because of the teacher's role as helper in this situation. The exchanges and tasks represented varied from class to class but involved predominantly those whose focus was primarily either form or meaning as described in

Table 4.2, Chapter 4[1]. Only exchanges and tasks that were conducted mainly in L2 or in a mixture of L2 and L1 were the focus of analysis. The latter were considered together with the former as there was often a fluid interchange of the two codes (code switching) by teachers in all of the classes. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, teacher-fronted interaction in the classes studied was based on the IRF discourse structure and included both the restricted (IRF1) and expanded (IRF2) versions.

5.2.2 Framework for analysis

The data were examined using the framework outlined in Table 5.1 (also presented as Table 3.6 in Chapter 3). The categories in the framework were either drawn or adapted from the existing literature or emerged from the data gathered for this study. They are subsumed under three broad areas: negative feedback; positive evidence; and interactional routines. The *negative feedback* categories are taken from Long and Robinson (1998) and the *positive evidence* categories are those used by Iwashita (2003). *Interactional routines* cover those categories of interaction not included in the other two broad areas, but that occurred frequently in the language classes studied. The term, *interactional routines,* comes from Ohta (2001)[2] who used it in her classroom-based studies of learners of Japanese as a second language. The categories of *elicitation, non-corrective repetition* and *reinforcement* were adapted from Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Lyster (1998). *Drilling* is repetitive in nature and requires limited and proscribed responses from learners. However, it is a manifestation of the pre-emptive negative evidence referred to by Long and Robinson. Ohta (2001) makes a case for considering choral responses[3] required from learners as part of whole class drills or prompts to the whole class as sources of corrective feedback. The source of feedback is not primarily the teacher, who cannot respond to individual student's oral contribution, but other students' responses and the teacher's

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[1] In other words, Q/A drills, pattern practice; Q/A 'conversations' exchanging personal information or opinions on a topic; brainstorms, pooling of ideas; review/discussion of learner-generated texts.

[2] "Linguistic anthropologists Peters and Boggs (1986) defined an interactional routine as "a sequence of exchanges in which one speaker's utterance, accompanied by appropriate nonverbal behavior, calls forth one of a limited set of responses by one or more other participants" (p. 81). Interactional routines are meaningful, culturally formulated modes of expression…Because of their repetitive nature, they also structure the interactive environment in predictable way" (Ohta, 2001, p. 5).

[3] Ohta (2001) considers that choral responses serve the same function as private speech or oral language that is spoken for dialogue with the self, rather than communicative interaction with others, for students who make little or no use of private speech.

response to the collective. Ohta (2001, p.154) argued that choral responses provide "an environment for all of the learners to orally produce responses…with opportunities to hear their own utterances and to hear how their utterances compare with those of others, resulting in corrective episodes when errors occur."

As with all hybrid classification systems, some categories are less discrete than others. Some overlap may exist between IR4 and PE1. However, the two have different functions. The function of IR4 is essentially hortatory and transitional, giving encouragement and approval to the learner's effort in using L2. It typically occurs within the IRF1 discourse structure, with the information or comment provided by the teacher in the third turn serving to close the exchange. On the other hand, the simple form of positive evidence (PE1) usually serves to continue and extend an exchange. It generally occurs within the IRF2 structure, where the third turn requires or invites a response from the learner and stimulates continuation of the exchange. This often sets up a cycle of interaction and leads to quite extended exchanges (also see Chapter 4: Discourse structure, for a discussion of those types of exchanges). There is also some possible overlap between elicitation involving questioning (IR2) and translation drills.

Thirty percent (30%) of T-C interaction[4] that occurred mainly in L2 and a mixture of L2 and L1 from the lessons transcribed was coded by the researcher and a second trained rater for each language (French and Italian near native speakers were used) employing the framework outlined in Table 5.1. The reliability of the coding was calculated using simple percentage agreement (i.e., the coding of the two raters was compared) for each of the categories. The results were 92% agreement on the French data and 91% agreement on the Italian data.

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[4] Including T-SG interaction, especially the data from Hibbertia Primary where students worked on self-access tasks during the lessons observed and T- C occurred only at the beginning and end of lessons.

Table 5.1: Framework for analysis of teacher-fronted interaction

	Negative feedback

Implicit	NF1. Recasts
	    a. In isolation
	    b. Followed by comment or metalinguistic feedback in L2 or L1.
	
	NF2. Negotiation moves
	    a. Clarification request
	    b. Confirmation check
	    c. Comprehension check.

Explicit	NF3. Explicit correction
	    a. Overt error correction in L2 or L1.
	    b. Overt error correction in L2 or L1, followed by explanation, comment or metalinguistic feedback.
	NF4. Request for learner to reformulate nontargetlike utterance.

	Positive evidence
Simple	An interactional move: PE1. that continues the learner's targetlike utterance.
Translation	PE2. in response to the learner's request for a model using L1 or in response to the learner's use of L1.
Completion	PE3. that completes a learner's incomplete utterance.

	Interactional routines
Elicitation	Interaction where the teacher: IR1. elicits completion of own utterance by strategically pausing. IR2. elicits a response using questions (in L2 or L1) such as 'How do you say X in L2?' or 'What does L2 item mean in L1?'
Non-corrective repetition	IR3. repeats the learner's utterance for confirmation. IR4. incorporates the learner's utterance with additional information or commentary.
Drilling	IR5. requests choral repetition of chunks of language by the whole class or groups of students IR6. requests repetition of words or chunks of language by individuals.
Reinforcement	IR7. gives praise, encouragement or affirmation in L2 or L1, in isolation or before and/or after other interactional moves.

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5.3. Discussion of examples

This section discusses examples of the types of feedback and interactional routines found in the data. The discussion is contextualised by Table 5.2 which gives a snapshot of the types found in the transcript of a lesson segment of between 4-12 minutes from each class. The segments involved different types of exchanges and tasks. All types of feedback and interactional routines except drilling of individual students (IR6) were found across the lesson segments. Table 5.2 is included to *illustrate* the range of feedback and interactional routines used by individual teachers and to give a *notional indication* of the use of particular types of feedback and interactional routines.

Table 5.2: Number of feedback and interactional routines used in a lesson segment

School	Co	Hi	Pi	Wi	Er	Or	Sa	Ac	Da	Na
Level of schooling	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Sec	Sec	Sec	Sec	Sec	Sec
Transcript length (in mins)	5 m	7 m	7 m	4 m	7 m	9 m	9 m	7 m	12 m	7 m
Negative feedback										
Implicit										
NF1. Recasts a. In isolation	5	3	1		5		11	4	5	1
b. Followed by comment or metalinguistic feedback in L2 or L1.		1		1			1			1
NF2. Negotiation moves a. Clarification request		1	1		3	3	3	2	2	2
b. Confirmation check					2		4	1	5	3
c. Comprehension check.				1			2	1	1	1
Explicit										
NF3. Explicit correction a. Overt error correction in L2 or L1		2	3	1		1	3	4	2	
b. Overt error correction in L2 or L1, followed by explanation, comment or metalinguistic feedback.		2		1	1		1	1	3	1
NF4. Request for learner to reformulate nontargetlike utterance.					1	2	2	2	2	

Positive evidence	Co	Hi	Pi	Wi	Er	Or	Sa	Ac	Da	Na
An interactional move:										
Simple										
PE1. that continues the learner's targetlike utterance	1		1	7	2	1	18	19	2	5
Translation										
PE2. in response to the learner's request for a model using L1 or in response to the learner's use of L1	1	3	2		1		2	1	1	
Completion										
PE3. that completes a learner's incomplete utterance.	1	1				1	1	2	2	
Interactional routines										
Elicitation										
Interaction where the teacher:										
IR1. elicits completion of own utterance by strategically pausing.	1	3	1	1	3		3	4	3	
IR2. elicits a response using L2 or L1 questions e.g., 'How do you say X in L2?' or 'What does L2 item mean in L1?'		2	5		1	9	4	18	7	
Non-corrective repetition										
IR3. repeats the learner's utterance for confirmation.	1	9	1	9	10	9	12	17	9	1
IR4. incorporates the learner's utterance with additional information or commentary.	1			1	2		1	1	4	1
Drilling										
IR5. requests choral repetition of chunks of language by the whole class or groups of students	7	5		18		1				1
IR6. requests repetition of words or chunks of language by individuals.										
Reinforcement										
IR7. gives praise, encouragement or affirmation in L2 or L1, in isolation or before and/or after other interactional moves.	10	7	7	9	11	7	16	12	10	4

The information provided by Table 5.2 shows the type of feedback and interactional routines used across the lessons that have been examined[5]. It demonstrates that all the teachers employed both negative and positive feedback, as well as interactional routines. The teacher from Sassafras Secondary stands out for using the widest range of feedback and interactional routines. The teachers from Acanthus and Danthonia Secondary also employed most of the types of feedback and interactional routines. The rest of the teachers tended to use a more restricted range of feedback and routines.

Several types of feedback and interactional routines appear to be used with some intensity by a couple of teachers[6]. Of note is the use of recasts (NF1) by the teacher from Sassafras Secondary; the use of the simple form of positive evidence (PE1) by the teachers from Sassafras and Acanthus Secondary, the use of elicitation (IR2) and non-corrective repetition (IR3) by the teacher from Acanthus Secondary and the use of choral drilling (IR5) by the teacher from Wilga Primary.

The remainder of this section presents and discusses examples of the types of feedback and interactional routines found to occur in the data. The discussion follows the sequence set out in Table 5.1 and begins with negative feedback. Where practical and clarity is not compromised, each type is referred to by its numerical/alphabetical appellation.

5.3.1 Negative feedback

A significant body of empirical research exists which demonstrates a facilitative role for negative feedback (and especially the implicit variety) in SLA. The various forms of negative feedback listed in Table 5.1 were evidenced in all the classes studied, but as in the study by Iwashita (2003), none were used very often. Of the implicit forms of negative feedback, recasts (NF1) were those most often used in both the primary and secondary classes. Confirmation checks (NF2a) and clarification requests (NF2b) - usually by the teacher – tended to occur more frequently than comprehension checks NF2c). Explicit negative feedback (NF3) was not given very often in more

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[5] An exception is IR6, drilling involving individual students, which did not appear in these lessons segments but was present elsewhere in the data.
[6] Some of this may be due to the different length of the segments.

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'conversational' contexts and tended to be provided predominantly in L1 by teachers. Both primary and secondary teachers often accompanied explicit correction with explanation or metalinguistic feedback. Predictably this tended to be more detailed in the secondary context. Pre-emptive explicit negative feedback in the form of grammar lessons occurred to a greater or lesser extent in all the secondary classes, but not in the primary classes. Requests for students to reformulate their utterances (NF4) occurred mainly to the secondary classes. Examples of each of these types of negative feedback are provided and discussed in detail below.

5.3.1.1 Implicit negative feedback
Recasts (NF1)
Although recasts were used by both primary and secondary teachers, primary teachers were more likely to restrict their use to correction of pronunciation, whereas the secondary teachers also recast errors related to lexicon/grammar. In the classes at both levels, teachers often did not seem to expect students to incorporate recasts and rarely seemed to give them an opportunity to do so. Sometimes this was because the teacher moved on to another aspect of the lesson or to another learner. However, in extended exchanges between the teacher and a single student, the lack of opportunity for the student to incorporate the feedback appeared to be because the teacher was concentrating on meaning rather than form. As Long (1996) pointed out, one of the strengths of implicit negative feedback is that it does not interrupt the 'communication'. There appeared to be ambiguity and inconsistency associated with feedback involving recasts, with teachers sometimes recasting what appeared to be acceptable student utterances and at other times ignoring obvious errors. The excerpts examined below illustrate the type of recasts provided and the issues discussed above.

The first two excerpts show teachers using recasts in T-C and T-SG interaction respectively. In excerpt 1, from a primary class where the teacher was working on asking directions with the whole class group, the recast (turn 2) focuses on pronunciation:

Excerpt 1[7]
1. *Std 4:* Excusez-moi, Madame - pour aller – au collage -
   Excuse me Madame, how to get - to the 'collage' [high school]

2. *T:* collège

3. *Std 4:* collège, s'il vous plaît
   high school, please.
                                            (Correa Primary)

Less typically, the student incorporates the teacher's recast and finishes the sentence in turn 3. However, this may have occurred because the teacher interrupted the student's utterance to make the correction.

The next example involves T-SG interaction from a secondary class and the recast addresses word order problems in Student 2's utterance (turn 2):

Excerpt 2
1. *Std 2:* Ask for help. Quando il compleanno è?
   When the birthday is?

2. *T: (comes to the group)* Quand'è il tuo compleanno? *(Students write the question.)*
   When's your birthday?
                                            (Danthonia Secondary)

In this excerpt the teacher briefly intervenes and helps overcome a difficulty then moves away to another group. The excerpt highlights a characteristic of T-SG interaction, especially in the secondary classes, where the teacher moved from group to group, responding to requests from students or addressing problems noted by them. Primary teachers, on the other hand, were more inclined to spend extended time working with small groups of students and seemed to be more comfortable with and skilled at working with learners in this way.

The next excerpt, from T-C interaction in a secondary class, comes from the more 'conversational' context of a warm-up Q/A session at the beginning of a lesson:

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[7] Teacher and learner errors in audio recordings are reproduced in the excerpts from the lesson transcriptions included in this chapter.

Excerpt 3

1. *T:* Buon giorno *(student name).* Leva il cappello per favore. *(No action.)* Leva il cappello per favore. *(Student obeys.)* A che ora mangi il pranzo a scuola?
   Good morning… Please take off your hat. … Please take off your hat. … What time do you eat lunch at school?

2. *Std 1:* Umm. - l'uno meno venti.
   At one [student uses the word for the cardinal number] twenty.

3. *T:* All'una meno venti, si. E di solito, che cosa mangi per il pranzo?
   At one twenty, yes. And usually, what do you have for lunch?
                                                  (Acanthus Secondary)

The recast in turn 3 focuses on the fact that the 'one' in *'one o'clock'* is different from the cardinal number *'one'* used by the student. The student has no opportunity incorporate the suggested modification as the teacher immediately asks another question after her recast. In fact, the 'si' at the end the recast seems to imply, *"You've got that haven't you? Now let's move on."* Thus the teacher's attention seems to be on the extending the exchange rather than getting a response to the negative feedback, a tactic that appears to succeed as the exchange continued for another seven turns.

Recasts were most often given in isolation, regardless of their focus. However, sometimes the teacher followed a recast with metalinguistic comment, as in excerpts 4 and 5.

Excerpt 4

1. *T:* Oui, c'est ça, - plat principal. *(Writes words/phrases on the board.)* - Et pour finir, qu'est-ce qu'on mange pour finir? Le gâteau ou des fruits?
   Yes, that's it – the main course. … And to end the meal, what does one eat to finish the meal? Cake or fruit?

2. *Std N:* Gâteau
   Cake.

3. *T:* Oui, ils s'appellent comment? Ils s'appellent comment -?
   Yes, what is that [part of the meal] called? It's called - ?

4. *Std N:* Dessert. *(English pronunciation)*

5. *T:* Le dessert, oui. *(Writes on board.)* Le dessert. Attention de ne pas dire 'désert', parce que le 'désert' c'est comme le Sahara. Ok? Le dessert. Bon.
   Dessert, yes. Dessert. Be careful not to say 'desert', because 'desert' is like the Sahara. Ok? Dessert. Good.
                                                  (Sassafras Secondary)

The teacher emphasises her recast by writing it on the board, repeating it and then drawing attention to the difference between 'désert' and 'dessert' by linking 'désert' with 'le Sahara'. Interestingly, she too follows her recast with a confirmatory 'yes' in L2. However, Student N is not given the opportunity to use the recast as the teacher moves on to distributing worksheets for the next activity.

In excerpt 5, the student's description of what a person is wearing in turn 5 ignores the obligatory noun-adjective agreement. The recast in turn 5 is followed by a brief explanation of this grammatical point in L1 and repetition of the recast:

> *Excerpt 5*
> 1. *T:* Le calze. Di che colore?
>   *Socks. What colour are they?*
>
> 2. *Std 2:* Nere.
>   *Black*
>
> 3. *T:* Continua.
>   *Go on.*
>
> 4. *Std 2:* I pantaloni - nero.
>   *Black trousers.*
>
> 5. *Tchr:* I pantaloni neri. With pantaloni, it ends with 'i', so 'nero' becomes 'neri'. I pantaloni neri.
>
> 6. *Std 2:* La maglietta marrone.
>   *A brown jumper.*
>
> <div align="right">(Wilga Primary)</div>

The recasts in excerpts 4 and 5 resemble the 'modified recasts' used in the classroom-based study by Doughty and Varela (1998). The modified recasts used in this study "drew attention to the problem [with forms of the past tense being used by students] and then immediately provided corrective feedback in the form of a recast" (Doughty & Varela, 1998, p.123) as well as providing metalinguistic comment. The approach in excerpts 4 and 5 has similar elements (recast, metalinguistic comment) but lacks the initial focus of attention on the linguistic problem.

The tendency for teachers not to give students an opportunity to incorporate recasts illustrated in excerpts 3 and 4 (and possibly 5, although the situation is not very clear from the transcripts) is certainly present in the data for this type of feedback. Whether this lack of opportunity to demonstrate 'uptake' in some way through 'output' is evidence for the lack of effectiveness of recasts in comparison to other types of feedback, as argued by Lyster and Ranta (1997), is a matter of debate. A number of recent empirical studies involving child and adult learners have challenged this view by demonstrating a delayed effect for recasts (Loewen & Philp, 2006; Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Oliver, 2000; Oliver & Mackey, 2003). In addition, Ohta (2001) claims that the negative evidence provided by recasts can be utilised by learners who are not direct recipients of this type of feedback from teachers. Ohta (2001) labels these incidental recasts.

Turn 5 of the next excerpt illustrates the complexity of some recasts:

> *Excerpt 6*
> 1. *T:* …Encore deux. *(A student seems to be trying to say a region but can't remember or produce the word or phrase.)* Encore. Another one. *Another two. Another. …*
>
> 2. *Std 4:* Les Hautes Alpes
>
> 3. *T: (writes on board)* Les Hautes Alpes. Est-ce que c'est dans le nord, dans le sud, dans l'ouest ou dans l'est du pays?
> *… Is it [the region] in the north, in the south, in the west or in the east of the country?*
>
> 4. *Std 4:* À la sud-est.
> *In the south east.*
>
> 5. *T:* Oui, le sud-est. Ici *(pointing to a map.)* D'accord?
> *Yes, in the south east. Here. Right?*
>
> 6. *Std 4:* Oui
> *Yes.*
>
> <div align="right">*(Sassafras Secondary)*</div>

In turn 5 the teacher partially recasts the student's "À la sud-est" to "le sud-est" rather than "au sud-est". Furthermore, the partial recast is preceded by reinforcement and followed by resumption of the topic, moves which might have obscured the recast for the learner.

The ambiguity of some recasts is illustrated in the next excerpt:

> *Excerpt 8*
> 1. *T:* Et toi *(Names a student)* , qu'est-ce que tu as mangé ce matin pour le petit déjeuner?
> *And you … what did you eat for breakfast this morning?*
>
> 2. *Std B:* - Du toast.
> *Some toast.*
>
> 3. *T:* Le toast! Oui, c'est bon. Avec - ?
> *Toast. Yes, that's good. With - ?*
>
> 4. *Std B:* - le beurre
> *With butter.*
>
> 5. *T:* Avec du beurre. D'accord. Et toi (names another student)?
> *With some butter. Agreed. And you?*
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

In turn 3 the teacher repeats the student's 'du toast' utterance of the previous turn as 'le toast', substituting the partitive with a definite article. It is difficult to judge whether this meant to be a recast or it is just reinforcement[8]. In turn 5, however, the teacher recasts 'le beurre' (turn 4) to 'du beurre', seemingly the opposite to what occurred in turn 3. This juxtaposition of apparently contradictory feedback could be confusing for the learner.

Negotiation moves (NF2)

As noted by Oliver and Mackey (2003), communication breakdown is a necessary starting point for negotiated interaction. Clarification requests (NF2a), confirmation (NF2b) and comprehension checks (NF2c) are characteristic features of negotiated interaction. Of these negotiation moves, clarification requests and confirmation checks appeared to be those moves most likely to be used by the teachers in this study. Negotiation moves tended to be employed less frequently by primary than secondary teachers, possibly because of greater use of exchanges and tasks that required unrehearsed responses from learners in the secondary classes. Indeed, negotiation moves were found mainly in meaning-focused tasks such as Q/A 'conversations' that involved the exchange of

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[8] The Independent Coder felt that coding this as a recast was not appropriate in this instance.

personal information or opinion and reviews of learner-generated texts, activities that occurred mainly in the secondary classes.

Excerpt 9, taken from a review of learner-generated texts, shows the teacher using clarification requests and confirmation checks in an attempt to negotiate meaning:

> *Excerpt 9*
> 1. *Std 12:* Che cosa ti piace fare la spesa?
>   *What do you like to do the shopping?*
>
> 2. *T:* Che cosa ti piace fare la sera? La spesa?
>   *What do you like to do in the evening? Shopping?*
>
> 3. *Std 12:* eh?
>
> 4. *T:* La spesa?
>   *Shopping?*
>
> 5. *Std 12:* La spesa.
>   *Shopping.*
>
> 6. *T:* Umm. No. Non so cosa intendi. Che cosa ti piace fare - ? *(Begins writing on board then stops.)* Quando ti piace fare la spesa? When do you like to do the shopping?
>   *I don't know what you're trying to say. What do you like to do -? ...When do you like to go shopping?...*
>
> 7. *Std 12:* Oh! No it was what you said before.
>
> 8. *T:* What did you want ask? The ending doesn't make sense.
>
> 9. *Std 12:* No, la sera.
>   *No, in the evening.*
>
> 10. *T: (Eureka tone in voice.)* La sera! Cosa ti piace fare la sera? Si.
>   *...The evening! What do you like to do in the evening. Yes.*
>   (Danthonia)

The starting point for interaction is the nontargetlike sentence offered by the student. The learner's question does not make sense because 'la spesa' doesn't fit with the question structure 'Che cosa ti piace fare~?' In turn 2, the teacher tries to clarify the student's meaning, through an interrogative recast, followed by a confirmation check of 'la spesa?' This seems to confuse the learner, who responds with a clarification request in turn 3. The

teacher repeats her confirmation check (turn 4) and the student repeats the word with an interrogative inflection. In turn 6, still somewhat baffled, the teacher tries another clarification request and then reformulates and translates the student's question. The use of L1 finally establishes that the interrogative recast offered in turn 2 was what the student had intended to say all along. The student's initial difficulty in expressing herself results in negotiated interaction. However, the latter part of the excerpt also seems to demonstrate some of the limitations of using implicit negative feedback with learners of low proficiency.

Although negotiation moves such as clarification requests may not always be simple and immediately self-evident to the struggling learner, they can generate considerable useful input and lead to successful resolution of the communication difficulty, as excerpt 10 shows:

> *Excerpt 10*
>
> 1. *T*: …Quels, quels sont tes légumes préférés, alors?
>   *What, what are your favourite vegetables, then?*
>
> 2. *Std J:* Les toasts
>   *Toasts.*
>
> 3. *T:* Le -?
>   *[definite article in the singular]*
>
> 4. *Std J:* Le toast.
>
> 5. *T:* Toast. *(Laughter from class.)* Ça n'est pas les légumes. C'est du pain. Le toast c'est un exemple pour le petit déjeuner. Oui, c'est très bien. Alors, comme légumes, par exemple, les tomates, les asperges, les choux, les choux-fleurs, les haricots. Ça, ce sont des légumes. Oui? Alors, quels sont tes légumes préférés?
>   *Toast. That's not a vegetable. That's bread. Toast is an example for breakfast. Well then, tomatoes, asparagus, cabbages, cauliflower, beans are examples of vegetables. Those, they are vegetables. Yes? What are your favourite vegetables, then?*
>
> 6. *Std J*: Le chou.
>   *Cabbage.*
>
>   *(Sassafras Secondary)*

The student's reply in turn 2 is both ungrammatical and makes no sense. In response, the teacher recasts the definite article and seeks clarification through use of the interrogative. However, not knowing that he has misunderstood the question, the student treats the teacher's feedback simply as a recast and repeats the word *toast*. The teacher explains why *toast* is not an appropriate answer and gives examples in L2 of a number of vegetables before restating her initial question. This enables the student to answer appropriately.

From the data it seems that confirmation checks could be used to focus on form as well as meaning. For example, in excerpt 11, the teacher wants to hear the student's diary entry:

> *Excerpt 11*
> 1. *T:* Dimmi, dimmi, dimmi!
>   *Tell me, tell me, tell me!*
>
> 2. *Std 3:* Oh –
>
> 3. *T:* Presto, presto!
>   *Quick, quick!*
>
> 4. *Std 3:* Non mi piace [il frase].
>   *I don't like the sentence[should be 'la frase'].*
>
> 5. *T:* Non mi piace -? Non mi piace -?
>   *I don't like -? I don't like-?*
>
> 6. *Std 3:* I don't like my sentence.
>
> 7. *T:* La frase?
>
> 8. *Std 3:* La frase.
>
> 9. *T:* Non mi piace la frase. Non mi piace la mia frase. *(Shhh – to others).*
>   Finisci, finisci!
>   *I don't like the sentence. I don't like the sentence. Finish, finish!*
>   *(Nardoo Secondary)*

The teacher uses confirmation checks in turns 5 and 7 to draw attention to the student's use of the wrong definite article with 'frase'. The confirmation check in turn 7 includes a recast, which the student immediately repeats. The student's L1 comment in turn 6 suggests that his attention is on what he had written, rather than the teacher's feedback. It

is also possible the correction provided by the teacher in turn 7 would not have been particularly salient to the student because of the feminine noun's irregular ending. Comprehension checks by teachers tended to be addressed to the whole class rather than individuals, as in turn 4 in the next excerpt, where the teacher addressed her comprehension checks not just to Student 3, but seemingly to the whole class:

> *Excerpt 12*
> 1. *Std 3:* Cosa stagione piace il tuo amico?
>   *What season your friend like?*
>
> 2. *T:* Quale stagione? –
>   *Which season?-*
>
> 3. *Std 3:* Si.
>   *Yes.*
>
> 4. *T:* Bene. (*Writes on board.*) Per sicure, per sicuro gl'italiani, a loro piace l'estate. Ok, ma una buona domanda. Quale stagione preferisci? (*Directs question to the class.*) Avete capito, ' stagione'? Estate, primavera, inverno, autunno. Capite – stagione? Si? No?
>   *Good. Certainly [wrong ending], certainly Italians, they like summer. Ok, but it's a good question. Which season do you prefer? Have you understood, 'stagione'? Summer, spring, winter, autumn. Do you understand – season? Yes? No?*
>
> 5. *Std 4:* Si
>
>   *(Danthonia Secondary)*

Comprehension checks addressed to individual learners were rare. An example occurs in the following excerpt:

> *Excerpt 13*
> 1. *T:* Di solito, a che ora mangi la cena?
>   *At what time do you usually have dinner?*
>
> 2. *Std 2:* Le nove e trenta.
>   *9.30*
>
> 3. *T:* La cena, la sera. La cena. Non la prima colazione, non il pranzo. La cena la sera.
>   *Dinner, at night. Dinner. Not breakfast, not lunch. Dinner at night.*
>
> 4. *Std 2:* Alle sei.
>   *At 6.*
>
>   *(Acanthus Secondary)*

The student's answer, in turn 2, to the teacher's initial question is not appropriate. By repeating 'la cena, la sera' at the beginning and end of the sentence the teacher forces the student to reflect on his original response. It is possibly this that enables him to modify his answer appropriately in turn 4.

Negotiation moves were not often initiated by learners. Those that were tended to be instinctive and semi-verbal as in turn 3 in excerpt 9, above.

The examples of the various types of implicit negative feedback provided above illustrate several characteristics of that feedback common in the data as a whole. Implicit negative feedback usually occurred as part of an extended number of turns between the teacher and one learner, that is, in an IRF2 discourse structure. The cycle of interaction often associated with this structure meant that these exchanges were likely to contain a variety of types of feedback and sometimes more extended use of L2 by teachers as they modified their input in response to learners' utterances. Recasts were sometimes an exception to this, occurring within an IRF1 discourse structure as in excerpts 2 and 3 above. An interesting feature of recasts in this data is that teachers often seemed to offer them just for noting by learners and did not appear to expect learners to use this feedback. In fact, teachers frequently did not allow the opportunity to do so because they immediately followed a recast with another question on the topic of conversation, suggesting that their immediate focus was the communicative exchange rather than grammatical form.

5.3.1.2 Explicit negative feedback

Explicit negative feedback can take the form of explicit or overt correction or involve a request to the learner to reformulate a nontargetlike utterance. As Long and Robinson (1998) point out, explicit negative feedback can be responsive to student error. It can also try to anticipate errors, that is, be pre-emptive, as in the traditional grammar lesson. Explicit negative feedback (and especially overt correction) is the kind of feedback with which the teachers in this study are likely to be most familiar and consciously include in their pedagogic repertoire. Interestingly, however, the teachers did not appear to use it to any greater extent than the various forms of implicit negative feedback.

Explicit correction (NF3)

In the data, the explicit correction offered by teachers tended to be accompanied by follow-up explanation of some kind, and this component of the feedback was generally given in L1. The accompanying explanation offered by the teachers from the secondary classes usually provided richer metalinguistic detail than that given by their primary counterparts. This is likely to reflect the greater capacity of the secondary students to absorb more technical explanations; however, it may also reflect the fact that Year 10 teachers are aware of the demands of the senior secondary curriculum for their language and used the opportunity to prepare students for language study at a higher level.

The next excerpts include a combination of explicit corrective feedback and metalinguistic comment. The first is a whole class drill of clothing vocabulary using flash cards:

> *Excerpt 14*
> 1. *T: [Holding up a picture of shorts]* Panta -
>
> 2. *Class:* - loni
>
> 3. *T:* Pantaloncini, short. Pantaloni, long. *[Alternatively showing pictures of each item]* Pantaloncini, short. Pantaloni, long. Benissimo
> *Shorts. Short. Trousers, long. ... Very good.*
> <div align="right">(Wilga Primary)</div>

The overt correction of 'pantaloni' to 'pantaloncini' in turn 3 is illustrated rather than explained by evoking concept of *short* and *long* in L1.

The next example is drawn from a primary class lesson where the teacher was reviewing how to ask directions, as preparation for pair work on this topic:

> *Excerpt 15*
>
> 1. *T:* The bank is -? The bank is on the left. How are we going to say, 'the bank is on the left'?
>
> 2. *Std 6:* à la banque droite.
> *The bank right.*
>
> 3. *T:* We're not going to say 'à la banque'. It means 'to the bank'. We're just going to say 'la banque – c'est à gauche'. *(Asks the class to repeat.)*
> *...the bank – is on the left.*
> <div align="right">(Correa Primary)</div>

It appears that Student 6 took 'à la banque' as a formulaic or unanalysed chunk and added to it 'droite' (instead of 'gauche') to construct *the bank is on the left'*. The overt correction in turn 3 takes two forms - explanation of why 'à la banque' is not appropriate and providing the correct form of *'the bank is on the left'*.

The propensity for secondary teachers to delve into metalinguistic detail when providing overt correction is evident in the examples from the secondary classes. Excerpts 16 and 17 both feature these two elements and both deal with a common misuse of the verb 'visiter'. Interestingly, each teacher takes a different approach to correcting the grammatical error and offers a different way of using 'visiter' correctly when referring to a person. In the first excerpt, the teacher anticipates the problem when briefing the class on a task they were about to do and gives the feedback pre-emptively:

> *Excerpt 16*
> *T:* Très bien. Ok. Maintenant vous allez parler. D'accord? Do you understand that. Ok. *(The teacher distributes sentence building sheet.)* Ok, I'm sure you've done this before. This is like a sentence building exercise. The first column, 'pendant les vacances', then you choose from the second column, then from the third column. *(Gives a number of examples using the sheet.)* And on the dotted line you can add anything else you like, another sentence. It could be 'pendant les vacances j'aime rendre visite à quelqu'un'. There's something that I'm probably mentioning here for the first time, but I will be nagging you about for the rest of the time in this class. When you visit people you don't 'visiter', you must say 'rendre visite à'. If somebody said, Je vais visiter ma grand-mère, it sounds really funny. It sounds as though your grandmother is a monument. When you visit monuments and places you use 'visiter'. When you visit people you must use 'rendre visite à'. Ok?
> *Very good. Ok. Now you're going to talk. Agreed?... The first column, 'during the holidays'...It could be 'during the holidays I like to visit someone'...*
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

The data from the pair work that followed using the sentence building sheet indicated that students used 'visiter' and 'rendre visite à' correctly.

In excerpt 17, the teacher provides corrective feedback in response to Student 13's attempt to use 'visiter', but is essentially directing her feedback to the whole class:

> *Excerpt 17*
> 1. *Std 13:* Je n'ai pas visité [mes amis.]
>   *I didn't visit my friends.*

2. *T:* D'accord. Visiter, c'est très spécial. Visiter, the verb is just for places. If you're visiting your friend you say 'aller voir mes amis'. That's the correct one. Je ne suis pas allée voir mes amis. That's difficult (indecipherable) D'accord? Aller voir. So with 'visiter', you say 'je n'ai pas visité Paris', but 'je ne suis pas allée voir mes amis.' D'accord? *(Names another student.)* *Agreed. The verb 'visiter' is very special…'go to see my friend.' … I didn't go to see my friend. Agreed? Go to see …I didn't visit Paris…I didn't go to see my friends. Agreed?*

3. *Std 14:* Je n'ai pas visité - à Beijing.
   I didn't visit – Beijing.

   (Eremophila Secondary)

This teacher, like her colleague in excerpt 36, illustrates the different usage required for people and places and is very careful to provide this feedback in as positive manner as possible. She begins her feedback with a confirmatory remark, stresses the 'specialness' of the usage and its difficulty as a grammatical point. Student 14 seems to have attended to the teacher's explanation (or had already acquired this linguistic point) as she used the correct form of the verb in her sentence in turn 3.

The final example contains the same mix of explicit correction, explanation that focuses on metalinguistic detail and diplomatic handling of the initial student error:

Excerpt 18
1. *T:* Va bene. Allora, *(names std)* che c'è?
   Ok. Well- what have you got?...

2. *Std 10:* Ho guardato il televisore.
   I watched the television set.

3. *T:* Good, ho guardato. We use – more often than not, la televisione. Ho guardato la televisione - ho guardato la televisione. *(Names a student)* got that right. I noticed most people were doing that correctly. With *(names a student)* you just wanted to say 'televisione' (indecipherable) normally you say you watch television rather than a television. We say, 'guardare la televisione', 'guardare la televisione', meaning to watch television. Ok? If you were going to buy a new television it has to be 'a', 'una televisione.' Va bene, una televisione? Va bene?

   (Nardoo Secondary)

The correction provided by the teacher focuses the different meaning of 'televisore' 'televisione' and the fact that the act of watching requires the latter rather than the former. In turn 3, the teacher encouragingly provides reinforcement for the correct part of the

Student 10's response, before recasting her sentence and the explaining why 'televisione' should be used. The explanation also draws attention to the subtle metalinguistic point of the difference in the meaning conveyed by the definite and the indefinite article, a grammatical feature that may or may not have been salient to the learners.

Requests for reformulation (NF4)

Requests for students to reformulate nontargetlike utterances tended to occur in particular contexts. The two examples discussed below both come respectively from a review of student generated texts and a Q/A 'conversation' that had a strong orientation to form. In both examples, the requests for reformulation involved the provision of explicit negative feedback in L1, combined with some form of elicitation. This approach is used very deliberately in excerpt 19, taken from a review of student generated texts:

> *Excerpt 19*
> 1. *T:* Ti piace guadare la televisione. La TV. This is the last one. Ultima domanda. Ultima domanda. Come si dice, going to the movies? No?
> *Do you like watching television. The TV…Last question. Last question. How do you say …?*
>
> 2. *Std 21:* Ti piace al cinema? *(final word with English pronunciation.)*
> *Do you like to the pictures?*
>
> 3. *T:* You're missing a verb. Ti piace - ? *(Another student near the tape says 'andare', sottovoce.)*
>
> 4. *Std 21:* Ti piace andare al cinema?
> *Do you like going to the pictures?*
> 5. *T:* Ti piace andare al cinema?
>
> <div align="right">*(Danthonia Secondary)*</div>

In turn 3 the teacher draws attention to the problem with the student's utterance by providing explicit negative feedback in L1. Then she prompts with, 'Ti piace -?' Helped, it seems, by another student's sub-vocalising the missing verb the student successfully reformulates her initial question.

The next excerpt is interesting because the teacher begins by providing models of the structure she wants the students to use in their responses to her questions in the Q/A 'conversation', which required the student to use the passé composé in the negative:

Excerpt 20
1. *T:* (Indecipherable, in French). I want to know what you did not do on the weekend. D'accord? Remember last week on a discuté the passé composé, le negative dans le passé composé. Moi, moi, je n'ai pas fait mes devoirs pendant le weekend. Je n'ai pas fait mes devoirs. Qu'est-ce que vous n'avez pas fait? What did you not do. So putting in 'ne pas' in the passé composé. (Names a student.)
    …Remember last week we discussed the present perfect, using the present perfect in the negative. I, I, I didn't do my homework during the weekend. I didn't do my homework….

2. *Std 1:* Uum Je n'ai regardé pas la télé
    I didn't watch television.

3. *T:* Ok. Where does 'ne pas' go in the passé composé negative? Around which part? You said it all the right way except one –
4. *Std 1*: Je n'ai -

5. *T:* Right, You said 'Je n'ai regardé pas' -
    …I didn't –

6. *Std 1:* Je n'ai pas regardé [la télé].
    I didn't watch the tele.

7. *T:* Je n'ai pas regardé la télé. C'est ça.
    I didn't watch the tele. Right.
                                        (Eremophila Secondary)

Student 1 either does not notice or ignores the pre-emptive explicit negative evidence provided by the teacher in turn 1 and inserts the 'pas' after the verb, as she had obviously learned to do when using the negative form of the present tense (turn 2). Using L1, the teacher then tries to elicit the rule regarding the use of the negative in the past and points out that the student has erred on one point only (turn 3). The student begins to reformulate her response (turn 4), but hesitated after 'n'ai', perhaps still uncertain as to how she should correct her error. The teacher's repetition of the student's incorrect utterance, pausing to allow her to notice the point of error, seems to have facilitated reformulation by the learner.

5.3.2 Positive evidence
Positive evidence refers to an interactional move by the teacher that provides a model of L2 in response to a learner's utterance. A review of the literature suggests that positive

evidence has been given much less attention than negative feedback in interaction studies. However, a study by Iwashita (2003) found that positive evidence was the type of input NSs most frequently provided to learners and identified three types: simple; translation; and completion. An examination of the data indicated that teachers in this study also made use of positive evidence when providing feedback to learners and that its use seemed to feature in exchanges that had an IRF2 structure, as the examples discussed below show.

Simple (PE1)

Iwashita (2003) found that the type of positive evidence that was most often given was the *simple* form (PE1), where the NS continued a learner's target-like utterance. This was also the case for the teachers in this study, especially those from Acanathus and Sassafras Secondary.

The simple form of positive evidence (PE1) seemed to occur in the Q/A 'conversations' with which several of the secondary teachers often began their lessons or introduced new tasks. This form of feedback seemed to help extend exchanges with less fluent students and thus contribute to development of an IRF2 discourse structure. This is illustrated in excerpts 21 and 22:

> *Excerpt 21*
> 1. *T: (Writes initial question on board.)* Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire pendant les vacances? Par exemple, moi, moi j'aime aller en Europe et visiter les musées, les galleries d'art. Oui, j'aime aussi aller aux concerts. Tu aimes aller aux concerts?
> *What do you like doing during the holidays? For example, I, I like going to Europe and visiting the museums, the art galleries. I also like going to concerts. Do you like going to concerts?*
>
> 2. *Std 7 M:* Oui.
> *Yes.*
>
> 3. *T:* Oui. Quel genre de concert? Les concerts de rock?
> *Yes. What kind of concert?   Rock concerts?*
>
> 4. *Std 7:* Je ne sais pas.
> *I don't know.*

5. *T:* Vous ne savez pas? Au concert de musique classique?
   You don't know? To classical music concerts.

6. *Std 7:* No.
   No.

7. *Tchr:* Non. Au concert de pop? Any particular singer?
   No. To pop concerts?

8. *Std 7:* Bono.

<div align="right">*(Sassafras Secondary)*</div>

In turns 3, and 5, the teacher uses the 'simple' form of positive evidence to continue the exchange by firstly asking a generic question about the topic and then following this with a specific question. A similar process occurs in turn 7; however, here the teacher recasts the student's *'No'* to 'Non' before continuing the exchange with a question in L2, followed by another in English, possibly because she was not confident the student would understand if she used French.

The teacher uses PE1 over several turns and in a number of ways in the excerpt that follows:

Excerpt 22
1. *Std 3:* Ma non mi piace.
   But I don't like it.

2. *T:* Hai scritto, 'Non mi piace la mia frase'?
   Have you written, 'I don't like my sentence.'
3. *Std 3:* No.

4. *T:* Non vuoi leggere la frase?
   You don't want to read the sentence?

5. *Std 3:* No.

6. *T:* Non voglio leggere la frase. – Non voglio leggere la frase. *(writes sentence on the blackboard).* Non voglio leggere.   Non voglio leggere la frase. È privata?   È cosa privata?
   I don't want to read the sentence. – I don't want to read the sentence. I don't want to read. I don't want to read the sentence. It is private? Is it something private?

7. *Std 3 (Laughs)*

8. *T:* Non vuoi condividere? Non vuoi condividere?
    Don't you want to share [it]? Don't you want to share [it]?
                                            (Nardoo Secondary)

The context for the exchange is a discussion about the student's diary entry, which begins with the student expressing dissatisfaction with what he had written. In turn 2, the teacher attempts to confirm what the student had written. She continues the interaction in turn 4 by clarifying what he wanted to do and in turn 6 reformulates his response in the first person, giving it emphasis by repeating it and writing it on the board. The teacher concludes turn 6 by asking a question about the privacy of the entry. The student's non-verbal response suggests he has understood her query and teacher responds in turn 8 with yet another question. Unfortunately, the dialogue was truncated at that point, as the teacher noticed the student was chewing gum and began to admonish him for this.

The final example comes from a primary class T-SG exchange. In this exchange the teacher questions the learner about the contents of the ideal hamburger he had drawn following a class discussion of an advertising text in Italian for McDonald's:

Excerpt 23
1. *T:*… Che cos'altro c'è?
    What else is there?

2. *Std:* Ha -
    It has -

3. *T:* Prosciutto, mortadella, salame, manzo?
    Ham, mortadella, salami, beef?

4. *Std:* Pollo.
    Chicken.

5. T: Una fetta, due fette?
    A slice, two slices?

6. *Std:* Due
    Two

7. *T:* Due fette. E prosciutto?
    Two slices. And ham?

8. *Std:* Pane.
    Bread.

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9. *T:* Una fetta morbida?
   A soft slice?

10. *Std:* No.

<div align="center">(Wilga Primary)</div>

As in the other two excerpts, the teacher's questions in turns 3, 5, 7 and 9 build on the student's monosyllabic responses to extend the exchange, thus providing him with useful comprehensible input.

Translation (PE2) and completion (PE3)

The two other types of positive evidence were *translation* (PE2), where the teacher translates an L1 response provided by the learner into L2 and *completion* (PE3), where the teacher completes a student's incomplete utterance. These types of feedback did not seem to be utilised as often as PE1.

In the case of PE2, the teacher usually translated the student's L1 utterance without comment. However, in excerpt 24, the teacher prefaces her translation in turn 3 with a request for L2 use by the student:

> *Excerpt 24*
> 1. *T: (Names a student)* hai scritto qualcosa?
>   *Have you written anything?*
>
> 2. *Std 1:* I'm not finished yet.
>
> 3. *T:* In italiano! – Non ho ancora finito. Non ho ancora finito. Student 2, hai scritto? *(Indecipherable - in English.)* - Ready. Va bene…
>   *In Italian! – I haven't finished yet. I haven't finished yet. Student 2, have you written [your diary entry]?. … Ok…*
>
> <div align="right">(Nardoo Secondary)</div>

Excerpt 24 has an IRF1 discourse structure as the teacher's next interaction is not with Student 1, but another student. However, both PE2 and PE3 also occurred in an IRF2 discourse structure. This is illustrated in the next excerpt, where the PE3 move occurs in turn 3:

> *Excerpt 25*
> 1. *T:* Une chose, one thing, négative qu'on peut dire de la ville.
>   *One negative thing about the city.*

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2. *Std 9:* Umm, les gens sont - .
   ...the people are –

3. *T:* Les gens -? Les gens sont stressés?
   The people -? The people are stressed out.

4. *Std 9:* Yes

5. *T:* C'est ça.
   That's right.

<div align="right">

(Eremophila Secondary)

</div>

Interestingly, the teacher initially uses strategic pausing to try to get the student to complete the sentence. As the student does not seem able to respond, the teacher completes her utterance and the completion is accepted by the student.

The completion of an utterance by the teacher is not always necessarily helpful to the student, especially if the completion does not reflect the student's communicative intentions, as appears to be the case in the next excerpt:

Excerpt 26
1. *T:* Come stai oggi?
   How are you today?

2. *Std T:* Bene, e Lei?
   I'm well and you?

3. *T:* O, così, così grazie.   Dove vai in vacanza in dicembre? - *(The student has difficulty responding so the teacher prompts her.)* Vado - Oh, so so. Where are you going for your holidays in December? - I'm going - …

4. *Std T:* Vado – non lo so.
   I'm going – I don't know.

5. *T:* Non lo so! *(Chuckles)* Vado – quale città? Vado a - . *(The student still doesn't respond.)* Vado a Margaret River.
   I don't know!... I'm going – to which city? I'm going to - I'm going to Margaret River.

6. *Std T:* Oh.

7. *T:* Vado a Roma – vado a – You can make it up, it doesn't have to be true.
   I'm going to Rome – I'm going to –...

8. *Std T:* Ok. Um. *(Nervous gulp from student. Still can't produce a response.)*

<div align="center">

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</div>

9. *T: (Referring to a resource sheet the class is using.)* Vado a Roma – vado a – You can make it up, it doesn't have to be true. *(Sotto voce comments from other students in the class.)* Vado a Parigi. Vado a Roma. Vado - *I'm going to Rome – I'm going … I'm going to Paris. I'm going to Rome. I'm going -*

10. *Std T:* Vado a Roma.

(Acanthus Secondary)

In this excerpt, the teacher does not accept the student's answer in turn 4, even though it is both target-like and communicatively legitimate. Instead, the teacher attempts to elicit the desired response and finally succeeds in turn 10. To achieve this she uses various techniques in addition to 'completion': strategic pausing followed by questioning in turn 5; strategic pausing and then prompting in L1 in turns 7 and 9[9]. The student finally produces an acceptable answer, but seems to remain somewhat mystified about the language she has produced.

5.3.3 Interactional routines

A considerable proportion of the interaction in the classes studied consisted of interactional routines. Interactional routines could be quite formulaic in nature (e.g., greetings, reinforcement) or be less formulaic and vary in content but maintain a predictable structure. Elicitation and non-corrective repetition, the two most pervasive interactional routines found in the data, are discussed first, followed by drilling and reinforcement.

5.3.3.1 Elicitation

Interactional routines involving elicitation consisted of two forms – strategic pausing (IR1) and questioning (IR2). These forms were evident in most of the lessons. However, a couple of teachers seemed to make intensive use of 'questioning' (IR2). The data pointed to 'strategic pausing' being associated with the IRF2 structure and 'questioning' with the IRF1 structure. This association is discussed in the examination the examples of these two types of elicitation that follows.

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[9] The comments from other class members in turn 9 illustrate the practical constraints (time, willingness of other learners to wait for a fellow student who takes considerable time to respond) on interaction between a teacher and an individual student in the context of a whole class activity.

Strategic pausing (IR1)

Teachers in this study generally used strategic pausing to elicit specific items of vocabulary or to encourage learners to elaborate on a prior utterance. Excerpt 27 includes an example of the former:

> *Excerpt 27*
> 1. *T:* Si, you can have pane.
>
> 2. *Std 11:* Vegetali.
>   *Vegetables.*
>
> 3. *T:* La - ? How do you say vegetables? La - ?
>   *The -? - The -?*
>
> 4. *Std 12:* Verdura.
>   *Vegetables.*
>
> 5. *T:* Tell me some kind of vegetables you can have on your side dish, in
>   Italiano. *(Students call out examples.)*
>   *(Acanthus Secondary)*

In turn 3 the teacher does not accept 'vegetali' for vegetables and wants 'verdura', which more accurately reflects current usage. She suggests the need for a feminine noun (the final 'i' in 'vegetali' signals a masculine noun in the plural) by giving the singular form of the feminine definite article and following it with a strategic pause. She also prompts with a question in L1. These elicitation moves appear to be directed to Student 11; however, it is Student 12 who reformulates and offers 'verdura' in turn 4, apparently having picked up the metalinguistic clues. This seems to occur because the teacher had encouraged students to call out their response to questions rather than waiting to be asked to answer, resulting in exchanges with each of the students that reflect the IRF1 structure.

The next excerpt also features the teacher using strategic pausing, along with part of a desired response, in an effort to get a student to reformulate an utterance that is only partly correct:

> *Excerpt 28*
> 1. *T:* Ragazzi, per favore! *(Names a student),* what about if you wanted to
>   ask them what they liked to do after school?
>   *Boys and girls, please! …*

2. *Std 13:* Uum, che cosa, che cosa ti piace fare -
   Uum, what, what do you like to do –

3. *T:* What's after school?

4. *Std 13:* La scuola.
   School.

5. *T:* Dopo - ?
   After -?

6. *Std 13+ several others:* Dopo scuola.
   After school.

   (Danthonia Secondary)

Here the teacher interacts with one student only, rather than with several of them as in excerpt 6. In turn 3 she attempts to help the student complete the question he's constructing by prompting him with a question in L1. The response given is only partly right, and she provides the missing element and pauses strategically to allow the student to complete the response, which he does in turn 6[10]. The use of strategic pausing to help students reformulate utterances that are partially correct in this and the previous excerpt suggest that there may be potential for overlap between IR1 and NF4 in the framework for analysis outlined in Table 5.1.

In the next example, the teacher uses strategic pausing to encourage Student C to add to his one word response to her initial question:

Excerpt 29
1. *T:* …D'accord! Et toi *(names the student)*, qu'est-ce que tu as mangé ce matin?
   Agreed! And you…what did you eat this morning [for breakfast]?

2. *Std C:* Toast.

3. *T:* Du toast aussi. Avec -?
   …Also toast. With - ?
4. *Std C:* Jam.

5. *T:* De la confiture. De la confiture. À la fraise?
   Jam. Jam. Strawberry jam?

---

[10] The student's omission of the article in his reformulation is ignored by the teacher.

6. *Std C:* Oui.
   Yes.

The 'Avec –?' in turn 3 is preceded by a recast, as the student did not pronounce 'toast' the French way and omitted the partitive article used when talking about indeterminate quantities[11]. Student C responds in English (turn 4). This enables the teacher to provide further feedback, firstly, in the form of positive evidence by translating 'jam' (which she emphasises by repeating the phrase) and secondly, in the form of a clarification request about the type of jam. The teacher's use of strategic pausing in turn 3 expands the discourse to an IRF2 structure involving a second exchange sequence. Significantly, the interaction is between the teacher and the same student, rather than the teacher and a successive number of students.

Excerpt 30 from the Italian class at Acanthus Secondary is a Q/A exchange on the same topic and furnishes a similar example of strategic pausing used in order to get the student to elaborate on a previous utterance (turn 5):

Excerpt 30
1. *T:* All'una meno venti, si. E di solito, che cosa mangi per il pranzo?
   At 12.40, yes. And what do you usually eat for lunch?

2. *Std 1:* - [hamburger]

3. *T:* Un' amburger. Un tramezzino?
   A hamburger. A sandwich?

4. *Std 1:* Si.
   Yes.

5. *T:* Con? -
   With - ?

6. *Std 1:* Con una gassata.
   With mineral water.

7. *T:* E con formaggio? Un pomodoro?

---

[11] This grammatical feature would probably not have been 'noticed' by this or any other of the students in this class. Nevertheless, research findings pointing to the delayed impact of recasts suggests that they may contribute to language development in the long term (Loewen & Philp, 2006).

8. *Std 1: (Says something indecipherable. Laughter.)*
<div align="right">*(Acanthus Secondary)*</div>

In this instance the student responds in L2 and the teacher seeks more information (turn 7). The questions asked suggest that, in turn 5, the teacher may have intended to elicit the contents of the sandwich rather than what was consumed in addition to the sandwich.

The excerpts discussed demonstrate some of the different purposes for which strategic pausing is used during teacher-fronted interaction. In excerpt 27, a combination of the nature of the activity and the orientation of the teacher's questions resulted in the one turn only interaction structure (IRF1). Excerpts 28-30, on the other hand, show that strategic pausing can function to coax responses from the learner and result in interaction that reflects the IRF2 structure.

Questioning (IR2)

In the data examined, elicitation by questioning consisted of the teacher asking *'How do you say~?'* in L2 or a question in L1 that implied the same thing, and, asking *'What does L2 item mean in L1?'* An excerpt is provided to illustrate each of these two types of questioning. In the first excerpt, the teacher uses both the formulaic, 'Come si dice~?' and the implied L1 equivalent:

> *Excerpt 31*
> 1. *T:* … Poi, dopo la pasta, dimmi cosa si mangia dopo la pasta? Come si dice 'meat', per esempio?
>   *Then, after the spaghetti, tell me what you eat after the spaghetti? How do you say meat, for example?*
>
> 2. *Std 7:* La carne.
>
> 3. *T:* La – la carne, si. The main course is 'la carne', il pollo, il -?
>   *La – la carne, yes. …meat, chicken, -?*
>
> 4. *Std 8:* Pesce.
>   *Fish.*
>
> 5. *T:* Come si dice, side dishes?
>   *How do you say, …?*
>
> 6. *Std 8:* L'insalata.
>   *Salad.*

7. *T:* That's a type of side dish. What's the actual category called? *(Names another student.)*

8. *Std 9:* - I – contorni.
Side dishes

9. *T:* I contorni. Quali sono i contorni? What can we have as contorno?
Side dishes. Which side dishes?...

10. *Std 10:* Pane.
Bread.

<div align="right">*(Acanthus Secondary)*</div>

In the lesson from which this excerpt is taken, the teacher was reviewing vocabulary associated with the food eaten in particular courses as part of the warm-up 'conversation' at the beginning of the lesson. She uses the formulaic L2 question, 'Come si dice ~?' in the first turn and then again in turn 5. In turn 7, on the other hand, she reverts to L1, first to indicate that Student 8's response is inaccurate and then to ask the equivalent of 'Come si dice ~?' in L1. Interestingly, turns 1-3 and 7- 9, where elicitation through questioning occurs both in L2 and L1, have the IRF1 structure. Other teachers also used the 'questioning' form of elicitation; however, the teacher from Acanthus Secondary was inclined to use the L2 form quite intensively, especially as part of whole class review of work done in groups for Jigsaw activities.

The second type of elicitation through questioning, *'What does L2 item mean in L1?'* is evident in turns 3, 7. 9 and 11 in excerpt 32:

Excerpt 32
1. *T*: S'il vous plaît, trouvez la page, 'A l'agence de voyage, à l'agence de voyage.' …On Monday we went through à l'agence de voyage. Can you tell me some of the words we learnt from that?
Please find the worksheet, 'At the Travel Agent, At the Travel Agent.'

2. *Std 1:* D'abord.

3. *T:* Ok. D'abord. What does it mean?

4. *Std 1:* First.

5. *T:* Ok. Another one!

6. *Std 2:* À la retour.

7. *T:* Aller-retour. – Ok, what does it mean?

8. *Std 2:* Return ticket. …

9. *T:* What about the word, 'compte'?

10. *Std 4:* Bill

11. *T:* Très bien. What about, 'combien le billet coûte-il?'

12. *Std 5:* How much the ticket costs.

(Orania Secondary)

This type of questioning was used occasionally by most teachers. The teacher from Orania Secondary, however, seemed to rely on it heavily, both in this kind of review activity and in other kinds of activities. The excerpt demonstrates the limitations of this interactional routine. As van Lier (1998), Ohta (2001) and others have observed, what the teacher does with the third part of the IRF structure is crucial to its potential to contribute to language learning. Elicitation questions in L1 such as those discussed above do not appear to stimulate anything beyond the standard and very limited display answer from the learner, even within the IRF2 structure, as turns 1-4 and 5-8 demonstrate.

5.3.3.2. Non-corrective repetition

Non-corrective repetition as an interactional routine was common in both the primary and secondary classes investigated in this study. Of the two types listed in Table 5.1 (IR3 and IR4), the former, where the teacher repeats the learners' utterance to provide confirmation was most in evidence. Four excerpts from the data are examined to show how teachers used the two types of non-corrective repetition in different exchanges and tasks. The tendency for non-corrective repetition to occur in the IRF1 discourse structure is also illustrated in these excerpts.

The first two excerpts (33 and 34) feature mainly repetition of the learner's utterance without additional information (IR3), while excerpts 35 and 36 involve repetition with additional information (IR4). Excerpt 33 focuses on vocabulary and occurs within the T-

SG participation structure. The teacher is revising colours with a pair of learners in preparation for the pair doing a simple one-way information gap activity:

> *Excerpt 33*
> 1. *T:* …C'est de quelle couleur?
> *What colour is it?*
>
> 2. *Std M:* Bleu.
> *Blue.*
>
> 3. T: Oui, bleu.
> *Yes, blue.*
>
> 4. *Std M:* I haven't got anything blue.
>
> 5. *T:* Et ça?
> *And this?*
>
> 6. *Std A:* Um, vert
> *Green.*
>
> 7. *T:* Vert. Bien. Et ça?
> *Green. Good. And this?*
>
> <div align="right">(Hibbertia Primary)</div>

The teacher employs a simple Q/A approach and alternates between the two learners. She repeats the learners' correct utterances (turns 3 and 7) and accompanies this with expressions of reinforcement.

In the next excerpt, which occurs in T-C interaction, the teacher is reviewing vocabulary associated with a recipe the class would later make. Her repetition of students' utterances also appears to have a mainly confirmatory function:

> *Excerpt 34*
> 1. *T:* Una tazza di zucchero, si, un po' di caffè. Altro? Alzate la mano. Cosa mi serve per fare il tiramisù?
> *A cup of sugar, yes, some coffee. What else? Hands up. What do I need to make tiramisù?*
>
> 2. *Std 2:* Un pacchetto di biscotti.
> *A packet of biscuits.*
>
> 3. *T:* Bravissima. Si, un pacchetto di biscotti. Altro? *(names a std)*
> *Very good. Yes, a packet of biscuits. What else?*

4. *Std 3:* Una tazza di zucchero.
   A cup of sugar.

5. *T:* Si, una tazza di zucchero. Altro? Biscotti, zucchero, caffè. Cos'altro mi serve?
   A cup of sugar. What else? Biscuits, sugar, coffee. What else do I need?

6. *Std 4:* Le uova.
   Eggs.

7. *T:* Le uova. Eccellente.   Tutto l'uovo? Which part of the egg?   Il -?
   Eggs. Excellent. All the egg?... The -?

8. *Std 4 & 5:* Rosso.
   Yolk.

<div align="center">(Acanthus Secondary)</div>

The teacher's purpose appears to be to elicit the key vocabulary items needed for the recipe, in other words display rather real exchange of information. The teacher's repetition of each student's response in turns 3, 5 and 7 functions as a type of drill and she combines this repetition with expressions of praise and approval. Her use of *'Altro?'* after she repeats the student's response seems to serve to close her interaction with Student 3 and invite another student to respond, an invitation that Student 4 takes up. Turns 1-5 consist of two IRF1 sequences. This structure is partly, but perhaps not wholly, a function of the type of activity being engaged in, as turns 6-8 have an IRF2 structure. In turn 7, the teacher follows her non-corrective repetition of 'le uova' with a negotiation move in the form of a clarification request ('Tutto l'uovo?'), thus inviting a further response from Student 4. However, she immediately translates the question into L1 then follows this with an elicitation move by giving the first part of the required answer and pausing strategically for the response. This enables Student 4 (and 5) to supply the correct answer, but removes Student 4's need to try to negotiate meaning and hence the chance for the teacher to offer modified L2 input in response.

Excerpt 35 features mainly IR4. The excerpt comes from a Q/A exchange in which students were asked to call out the names and features of regions of France they had previously learned:

Excerpt 35

1. *T:* Ok. La leçon dernière on a parlé de la France. Oui? Les régions de la France. Qui se rappelle, qui se souvient du nom de quelques régions de la France? Il y avait l'Ile de France avec la capital, Paris. Vous vous rappelez d'autres régions? – Oui -
   Ok, the previous lesson we talked about France. Yes? The regions of France. Who recalls, who remembers the name of some France regions? There is the Ile de France with the capital, Paris. Do you recall other regions? - Yes -

2. *Std 1:* La Haute Normandie.

3. *T:* La Haute Normandie. La Haute Normandie. *(writes on board)* Tu te rappelles? *(names a std)*?
   …Do you recall?

4. *Std 2:* Le Limousin.

5. *T:* Le Limousin avec ses belles vâches.
   Limousin with its beautiful cows

6. *Std 3:* Pays de la Loire.

7. *T:* Pays de la Loire *(writes on board)* avec ses beaux châteaux. Les châteaux de la Loire.
   The Loire with its beautiful chateaux. The chateaux of the Loire

                    (Sassafras Secondary)

This excerpt consists of three IRF1 sequences. In the first sequence, the teacher begins with a simple repetition of the Student 1's utterance in turn 3. In turns 5 and 7, however, she adds additional information after each repetition. 'La Limousin', offered by Student 2 in turn 4, becomes 'La Limousin avec ses belles vâches.' in turn 5. Similarly, Student 3's 'Pays de la Loire', is expanded to 'Pays de la Loire avec les beaux châteaux. Les châteaux de la Loire' in turn 7. While the teacher does not go beyond the IRF1 structure in this excerpt, she repeatedly extends the linguistic input she offers to learners as demonstrated above. Even in her initial question she uses the synonyms 'se rappelle' and 'se souvient' and then follows up 'Ile de France' with 'Il y avait l' Ile de France avec la capital, Paris.' Another example of IR4 is seen in excerpt 36, which comes from a lesson where the teacher was discussing questions student groups had prepared to ask exchange students who were to visit the class in subsequent lessons:

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Excerpt 36
1. *T:* Vediamo che cosa avete scritto …
   Let's see [hear] what you've written

2. *Std 11:* Che – um che cosa fai il weekend?
   What do you do during the weekend?

3. *T:* Bene.*(Writes on blackboard.)* Che cosa fai di solito – we'll put this in,
   'di solito' means 'usually' - il weekend? – Che cosa fai di solito il weekend.
   Il fine settimana. 'Il fine settimana' means 'il weekend'. Si. *(The teacher
   moves on to the next student.)*
   Good. … What do you usually do during the weekend? …
                                                   (Danthonia Secondary)

In turn 3 the teacher repeats the student's question with the addition of 'di solito', uses
translation to explain its meaning, then repeats the question again in its entirety.
Non-corrective repetition was not always restricted to the IRF1 discourse structure, where
the interaction between teacher and individual student is limited to the three turns that
make up that structure. It was also part of more extended interaction which reflects the
IRF2 discourse structure. This is well illustrated in turns 3 and 5 of the next excerpt,
which is taken from a longer exchange between the teacher and Student E:

Excerpt 37
1. *T:* Qu'est-ce que, qu'est-ce que tu as - dans ton sandwich?
   What's in your sandwich?

2. *Std E:* Un sandwich au jambon.
   It's a ham sandwich

3. *T:* Au jambon. Et avec de la salade aussi?
   Ham. And salad too?

4. *Std E:* Quelque fois.
   Sometimes.

5. *T:* Quelque fois. Pas aujourd'hui? - Aujourd'hiu?
   Sometimes. Not today? Today?

6. *Std E:* Non.
   No.
7. *T:* Ok, pas aujourd'hui. Ok. Très bien.
   Ok, not today. Ok. Very good.
                                                   (Sassafras Secondary)

The widespread use of non-corrective repetition raises questions about its function and impact. On the one hand, it represents an empathetic response by teachers to learners' language production which is likely to have an important social function and may encourage students to attempt to use L2 more frequently. Lyster (1998), however, drew attention to the similarity of non-corrective repetition and recasts in the data from the immersion classes he studied. He suggested that non-corrective repetition may diminish the salience of recasts and this may explain the limited effectiveness of recasts in comparison to elicitation in promoting repair. This study is not able to shed light directly on this matter. It may be, however, that the relatively subtle points of form often addressed by recasts may be hard for students to distinguish from the abundance of non-corrective repetition to which they are exposed.

5.3.3.3 Drilling

A feature of interaction in several of the classes studied was the use of drilling. Drilling was associated with teacher-directed activities involving review of vocabulary or grammar, various types of games and whole class reading L2 texts. Drilling could involve the whole class or individual students. In excerpt 38, the teacher is asking for a choral response from the whole class:

> *Excerpt 38*
> 1. *T: (Teacher holds up flash card.)* Che cos'è?
>   *What is it?*
>
> 2. *Class:* La maglietta, i pantaloncini
>   *Jumper, shorts.*
>
> 3. *T:* Benissimo.
>   *Very good.*
>
> 4. *Class:* Il giubotto.
>   *Jacket.*
>
> 5. *T:* giu. Like 'u' with a 'g'
>   *Teacher draws attention to the pronunciation of 'giu'.*
> 6. *Class:* Giu. Il vestito, i jeans, la gonna, i pantaloni
>   *…The dress, jeans, skirt, trousers.*
>   *(Wilga Primary)*

The focus of this exchange is recall and accuracy. The teacher concentrates on rewarding and reinforcing these aspects of language learning by providing praise (turn 3) and correcting pronunciation (turn 5).

Lessons in another of the primary classes were often based around an L2 text. The teacher from this class liked to use translation drills to review words and phrases from the text, as is illustrated in excerpt 39:

> *Excerpt 39*
> 1. *T:*…Abitava. Chi ricorda Cappuccetto Rosso. Dove abita la nonna?
>   Abitava la casetta bianca.
>   *…No, that's hide. Who remembers Red Riding Hood? Where did
>   grandmother live? She lived in a white house.*
>
> 2. *Std H:* Live.
> 3. *T:* Abita?
>
> 4. *Stds:* Live
>
> 5. *T:* Good, abita, live. *(Continues with several more words.)*
>   *(Pittosporum Primary)*

In this excerpt the teacher is asking students to translate from L2 to L1. She gives clues in L2 from the Red Riding Hood story to help the learners work out the meaning of 'abitava' and moves from an individual to a choral response. Curiously, the teacher seems to accept 'live' as the translation for both the past and present form of the verb.

Excerpt 40 features L2-L1 translation drills from a secondary class involving only individual responses:

> *Excerpt 40*
> 1. *T:* Ok. Qui peut me dire en anglais, quelle heure est-il quand je dis le temps?
>   Six heures trente.
>   *Ok. Who can tell me in English what time it is when I say the time [in
>   French] …*
>
> 2. *Std 1:* 6.30
>
> 3. *T:* Merci beaucoup. 6.30. Treize heures un.
>   *Thanks… 1.01 pm*
>
> 4. *Std 2:* 1.01

5. *T:* Neuf heures trente-sept.
   9.37am

6. *Std 3:* 9.37

7. *T:* Merci beaucoup.

<div align="right">*(Orania Secondary)*</div>

5.3.3.4 Reinforcement

The teachers whose lessons were observed for this study were generous in their use of reinforcement, which was given predominantly in L2. The excerpts from the lessons discussed include many examples of reinforcement, both in isolation and in combination with other types of feedback. In the latter case, teachers frequently framed their feedback with expressions of encouragement, agreement, assent or confirmation. An example can be seen in turn 5 from excerpt 4 above, where a recast of 'le dessert' is repeated several times and is followed by 'oui' and 'bon' in two of these instances.

5.4. Summary and discussion

This chapter addressed the first research question, 'What is the nature and pattern of interaction in LOTE classes?' with particular reference to teacher-learner interaction. It described and discussed the types of feedback and interactional routines used in teacher-fronted exchanges and the discourse structure in which they tended to occur. Examination of the data found that most teachers made use of a range of feedback and interactional routines. When teachers provided negative feedback, they tended to use implicit forms as often as explicit forms. Implicit negative feedback was most likely to be recasts given in isolation (NF1) and clarification requests (NF2a). As found by other studies (Leeman, 2003; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Oliver, 2000; Oliver & Mackey, 2003), immediate incorporation of linguistic feedback offered through recasts depended on the opportunity provided by teachers for this and the salience of the particular recast to the learner. With regard to the former, the teachers' focus seemed to be predominantly (and possibly rightly in the context of 'conversational exchanges') on the communication. Thus, they tended to provide recasts *en passant,* almost reflexively, and then move on immediately to asking the same or another learner a question that continued the conversation or go on to another

<div align="center">183</div>

task. Explicit negative feedback was generally in the form of explicit correction (NF3) and was sometimes accompanied by metalinguistic comment, usually in L1. There did not appear to be the "strong dispreference" for this type of feedback found by Seedhouse (2001, p.348) in his classroom-based research.

Simple positive evidence was the type of interaction most evident in teacher-fronted interaction from the classes studied and it appeared to be used quite intensively by a couple of teachers. At the same time, interactional routines, especially non-corrective repetition (IR3) and reinforcement (IR7) featured significantly in all the classes studied.

A noteworthy finding of this study was the relationship between the types of feedback and interactional routines and the two versions of the IRF discourse structure. Interactional routines such as non-corrective repetition and the questioning form of elicitation tended to be associated with the restricted version of the structure (IRF1) in which an exchange was limited to three turns and was initiated and ended by the teacher, usually with an evaluative comment. Elicitation involving strategic pausing was generally associated with the expanded IRF2 discourse structure, where the teacher's response in the third turn continues rather than closes the exchange. Feedback that was either positive evidence or negative feedback was also usually associated with the IRF2 discourse structure. This was so for simple positive evidence (PE1) where the teacher continued an exchange and for implicit negative evidence in the form of negotiation moves. Recasts appeared to feature both in an IRF1 and IRF2 discourse structure, the former occurring particularly where the teacher interacted with a different number of students in rapid succession. Explicit negative feedback in the form of overt correction usually involved the IRF1 structure.

The association found between particular types of feedback and interactional routines, and the IRF1 or IRF2 discourse structure, reaffirms the importance of the teacher's verbal behaviour in encouraging learners to engage in extended interaction, thus providing opportunities for them to produce modified output. Undertaking extended exchanges with individual learners, while at the same time keeping the rest of the class engaged, can be quite challenging within the context of T-C interaction. The teachers from Sassafras and

Acanthus Secondary were adept at doing this, particularly in the Q/A 'conversations' they used at the beginning of lessons to revise previously covered content and/or introduce new content. Interestingly, these two teachers employed the widest range of feedback techniques and tended to use them more often than other teachers, especially simple positive evidence. This form of input promotes student participation and, as Iwashita (2003) suggests, may have a role in facilitating language learning.

The fact that a significant proportion of the teacher-fronted interaction involved interactional routines was another noteworthy finding of this study and one that may have implications for student learning. With the exception of strategic pausing, the nature of these routines and the fact that they occurred in an IRF1 discourse structure means that the input provided and the opportunities for language production by learners were limited in both quantity and quality. This raises the question of their contribution to language learning. Ohta (2001) argues that interactional routines, or the "predictable patterning of language use in the social environment" are part of the environment of adult L2 learners (and, by implication, that of child and adolescent L2 classroom learners), as well as infants learning their L1. In her view, the repetitive nature of these routines gives structure to the interactive environment, such as the L2 classroom and "facilitates language acquisition by promoting the acquisition of relationships between language structure and social meaning" (Ohta, 2001, p.5). This claim would seem plausible in LOTE classes where learners' low proficiency level circumscribes their interaction in L2 with the teacher. It may also explain the pervasive use of reinforcement in L2 and of non-corrective repetition by teachers. These routines are ways in which the teacher establishes and maintains social connection with and between learners by encouraging their efforts at L2 use. On the other hand, the study of teacher-learner interaction by Oliver and Mackey (2003) indicated that the interactional routines described above do not occur as often in ESL classes and Ohta's assertions may be valid only in the LOTE classroom context.

Many of the excerpts examined in this chapter illustrate a tendency of teachers in this study to under-exploit the communicative potential of exchanges by making few interactional demands on learners. Musumeci (1996) found a similar tendency in her

study of interaction in university level content-based foreign language classes. Teachers' behaviour may be influenced by a number of factors. These include their knowledge and expectations of students' capacities, the practical need to give the maximum number of students a turn in a very short amount of time in order to keep all learners engaged and to balance individual and group needs. The findings about teacher perceptions of interaction (reported in Chapter 8) also suggest that teacher behaviour may reflect an understanding of the interaction process that does not appear to be well informed by the findings of SLA research over the past 25 years.

In addition to queries about the nature of teacher epistemology, this chapter raises questions about the relationship between the proficiency level of learners and the contribution of particular types of feedback to learning, especially implicit negative feedback. This issue is briefly explored here. Mackey (1999), Mackey and Philp (1998) and Iwashita (2003) identified proficiency level as a potential constraint on the effect of particular types of feedback. Excerpt 29 demonstrated the limitations of using negotiation moves with low proficiency learners. Following her study of task-based interaction between low proficiency learners of Japanese and NS, Iwashita (2003) argued for further research to investigate a number of variables regarding the effectiveness of negative feedback in that context. In particular, the need for the development of a threshold hypothesis for the facilitative role of interactional moves proposed by Iwashita (2003) seems to be supported by the findings of this research.

The focus of this chapter has been to describe the types of feedback and interactional routines used in teacher-fronted exchanges and to explore their implications for learning. The next chapter examines the patterns that underlie these feedback and interactional routines and explores how these patterns influence the learner's language production.

CHAPTER 6

PATTERNS OF TEACHER-LEARNER INTERACTION

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 demonstrated that the IRF discourse structure was the basis of much teacher-learner interaction in the classes studied. It also showed that there are two versions of the IRF: a restricted or IRF1 version, which consists of three turns only, the second of which is produced by the learner; and, an extended or IRF2 version, which consists of four or more turns. With the IRF2, the nature of the teacher's feedback in the third turn extends the exchange by inviting or requiring further learner response and, where appropriate, can provide an opportunity for learners to modify their output. This may result in further feedback from the teacher, and thus create a cycle of interaction. Chapter 5 identified the types of feedback and interactional routines used by teachers and examined their association with each of the two versions of the IRF.

The restricted structure of the IRF1 produces a single pattern of interaction, where the teacher both initiates and closes the exchange and the student output is limited to the response in the second turn. This pattern of interaction is a product of the institutional setting of the classroom. It is consistent with what Oliver (2000, p. 130) identified as the traditional approach to analysis of NNS-NS interaction; that is, a two-part sequence composed of: (a) the NNS utterance; and, (b) the NS response[1]. Transposed into the second language classroom context, this two-part sequence becomes: (a) the learner's utterance, usually in response to a teacher query or question[2], and (b) the teacher's feedback. This pattern, seen in the excerpt below, was common in data from this study:

> *Excerpt 1[3]*
> 1. *T:*…Student 3, qu'est-ce que tu n'as pas fait?.
>   …*What didn't you do?*

---

[1] Oliver goes on to note that this approach to analysis has been extended to include the learner's use of NF.
[2] The starting point for analysis of interaction in SLA research has usually been the NNS's or learner's utterance. This does not mean that a particular exchange has necessarily been initiated by the NNS. The NNS's utterance could have been stimulated by a NS's comment or query, just as in the IRF the learner's utterance is in response to the teacher's question or query.
[3] Teacher and learner errors in audio recordings are reproduced in the excerpts from the lesson transcriptions included in this chapter.

2. *Std 3:* Je n'ai pas joué au hockey.
   I didn't play hockey.

3. *T:* C'est parfait. Je n'ai pas joué au hockey. *(Names another student.)*
   That's perfect. I didn't play hockey.
                            (Eremophila Secondary)

Oliver (1995, 2000), however, argued that the two-part sequence does not reflect the interactive nature of conversations. Oliver proposed the three-part sequence, long recognised as a typical feature of classroom discourse, be used for the purposes of analysis of L2 interaction. This consisted of: (a) the NNS's (or second language learner's) utterance; (b) the NS (or teacher's) response; and, (c) the NNS's (or second language learner's) reaction. Through experimental and classroom-based studies which investigated the provision and use of negative feedback, Oliver (1995, 2000) identified eight distinct patterns of interaction involving this three-part sequence. They are:

1. Correct → continue → continue
2. Correct → negotiate → continue
3. Incomplete → continue → continue
4. Incomplete → negotiate → continue
5. Nontargetlike → NF → ignore
6. Nontargetlike → NF → respond
7. Nontargetlike → NF → no chance
8. Nontargetlike → ignore → continue

(Oliver, 2000, p 132)

6.2 Patterns of interaction

This chapter describes the patterns of interaction between teachers and learners found in the data from ten classes studied and discusses the relationship of these patterns to the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) discourse structure and to the types of feedback and interactional routines used by teachers. Following this, data on the occurrence of these patterns are presented and discussed. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the ways in which the patterns of interaction identified are likely to influence learners' language production.

An examination of the data in this research indicated that teacher-learner interaction, particularly the IRF2 discourse structure, clearly resonates with some or all of the eight patterns identified by Oliver (2000). It is apparent that there are some additional patterns as well. The framework used for analysis of patterns of interaction in the current data is outlined in Table 6.1 (also presented as Table 3.7 in Chapter 3). It encompasses the IRF1 pattern structure, the eight patterns identified by Oliver (2000), (referred to henceforth as three-part sequence patterns) and any additional patterns that emerged from the data. The same data that were analysed for feedback and interactional routines were analysed for patterns of interaction. This consisted of 30% of T-C interaction that occurred mainly in L2 and a mixture of L2 and L1 from the lessons transcribed. The data were coded by the researcher and a second trained rater for each language (the same French and Italian near native speakers used for the previous analysis) employing this framework. The reliability of the coding was calculated using simple percentage agreement (i.e., the coding of the two raters was compared) for each of the categories. The results were 95% agreement on the French data and 93% agreement on the Italian data.

Table 6.1: Framework for analysis of patterns of teacher-learner interaction

Patterns	Exemplification
Two-part sequence pattern input initiated by teacher (implied) → learner reaction →teacher response	Teacher question/request → learner response → teacher feedback (IRF 1 structure)
Three-part sequence patterns (as per Oliver, 2000) learner utterance → teacher response → learner reaction	1. Correct → continue → continue 2. Correct → negotiate → continue 3. Incomplete → continue → continue 4. Incomplete → negotiate → continue 5. Nontargetlike → NF → ignore 6. Nontargetlike → NF → respond 7. Nontargetlike → NF → no chance 8. Nontargetlike → ignore → continue Other three-part sequence patterns evident in the data
Additional patterns	Identified in data: Scaffolding pattern & private speech

6.2.1 Two-part sequence pattern

The two-part sequence pattern found in teacher-learner interaction is based on the IRF1 discourse structure. This pattern appeared often in the data and was particularly associated with interactional routines such as the questioning type of elicitation and non-corrective repetition. It was sometimes also evident in teacher-learner interaction that involved recasts. The two-part sequence pattern is shown in the teacher's interaction with four different students in excerpt 2:

> *Excerpt 2*
>
> 1. *T:* Ok, silenzio, let's look at the quantità. You should have pretty much filled these boxes *(referring to the worksheet).*
>
> 2. *Std 1:* Grammi.
>   *Grams.*
>
> 3. *T:* Si, grammi, cento grammi.
>   *Yes, grams, one hundred grams.*
>
> 4. *Std 2:* Un pacchetto di. *(Has difficulty saying it.)*
>   *A packet of.*
>
> 5. *T:* Un pacchetto, bravissima.
>   *A packet, very good.*
>
> 6. *Std 3:* Una fetta.
>   *A slice.*
>
> 7. *T:* Una fetta. Una fetta. If you haven't got any of them please add them to your box. *(Names a student)* another quantity that hasn't been mentioned.
>   *A slice. A slice…*
>
> 8. *Std 4:* - cucchiaino
>   *Teaspoon.*
>
> 9. *T:* Si, bravissimo, un cucchiaino
>   *Yes, very good, teaspoon.*
>
> <div align="right">*(Acanthus Secondary)*</div>

In this exchange, the teacher was reviewing a Jigsaw[4] task where small groups had worked together to build up the components of a recipe for an Italian dessert. The response made by each student to the teacher's stated or implied question (turns 2, 4, 6 and 8) is first part of each sequence. This is followed by feedback from the teacher, which consists of non-corrective repetition, often accompanied by reinforcement (turns 3, 5, 7 and 9). Feedback of this kind does not require further response from students, so in each case, the interaction concludes at the third turn.

6.2.2 Three-part sequence patterns

Examination of the data found that teacher-learner interaction based on the IRF2 discourse structure included instances of all eight of the three-part sequence patterns identified by Oliver (2000). A ninth pattern that seemed to warrant its own category was also observed. Pattern 9 (Nontargetlike → elicitation→ respond), begins with a nontargetlike utterance on the part of the learner. Teacher feedback is in the form of elicitation, to which the learner responds appropriately. Table 6.2 gives examples of each of the patterns. In order to contextualise each example, the initiating question is included with each example, italicised and in brackets.

The examples provided in Table 6.2 give an indication of the type of feedback likely to be associated with particular patterns. Teacher feedback in patterns 1, 3, 8 and 9 tend to be either positive evidence (pattern 1, Italian example; pattern 3, French example; pattern 8 French and Italian examples) or interactional routines (pattern 1, French example; pattern 3, Italian example; pattern 9 French and Italian examples). Teacher feedback in pattern 9 consists either of strategic pausing as in the Italian example or a 'How do you say X in L2?' type of question as in the French example. Coincidentally, the French example also includes strategic pausing.

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[4] A communicative activity for small groups where each group does part of a task or has part of the information necessary to complete the task, then comes together with other groups to share the missing information or part of the 'jigsaw' in order to complete the task.

Table 6.2: Examples of three-part sequence patterns

Three-part sequence patterns	Italian	French
1. Correct → continue → continue	*(T: Or what else do we call it? Il secondo piatto o -?)* *(... The second course or -?)* *Std 6:* Il piatto principale. *The main dish.* *T:* Si, e cosa mangi per il piatto principale? *Yes, and what do you eat as the main dish?* *Std 6:* Pasta.	*(T:Ok, qu'est-ce que tu as mangé?)* *(What did you ear?* *Std 6:* J'ai mangé – des petits pois. *I ate - peas* *T:* Des petits pois. Oui. *Peas. Yes* *Std 6:* Et poulet. *And chicken.*
2. Correct → negotiate → continue	*(T:Come stai oggi, A?)* *(How are you today?)* *Std A:* Ho fame. *I'm hungry.* *T:* Ho fame? Non hai mangiato per la colazione? *You're hungry? Didn't you have any breakfast?* *Std A:* No.	*(T: Who can tell me one positive thing about la campagne? Une chose positive.)* *(...the country. A positive thing.)* *Std 1:* Il est tranquille *It's calm.* *T:* Pardon? *Std 1:* Il est tranquille.
3. Incomplete → continue → continue	*(T: ...what about if you wanted to ask them what they liked to do after school?)* *Std 13:* Uum, che cosa, che cosa ti piace fare – *What, what do you like to do?* *T:* What's after school? *Std 1:* La scuola.	*(T: ...qu'est-ce que tu as mangé ce matin pour le petit déjeuner?)* *(What did you eat for breakfast this morning?)* *Std A:* um - le petit déjeuner - um *... breakfast* *T:* Qu'est-ce que tu as mangé? *What did you eat?* *Std A:* um - cereal - le céréale. *...Cereal...cereal.*
4. Incomplete → negotiate → continue	*(T: Bravissima. E come ritorni a Canberra in Australia? – Come? – A piedi?)* *(Very good. And how do you get back to Canberra in Australia. – How? – On foot?)* *Std 12:* A - *On -* *T:* A cavallo? *On horseback?* *Std 12:* Con il traghetto. *By ferry.*	*(T: A la montagne. Bien. Quelle montagne? En Australie?)* *(In the mountains. Good. Which mountain. In Australia?)* *Std F:* Non. En – *No. in -* *T:* Au Nepal? Mt Everest.? *Std F:* Oui. *Yes*
5. Nontargetlike → NF → ignore	*(T: E che cosa bevi?)* *(And what do you drink?)* *Std F:* Aranciata. *An orange drink.* *T:* Un'aranciata? *An orange drink.* *Std F:* Si.	*(T: Du poulet. Oui. - Avec quoi?)* *(Some chicken. Yes. – With what?)* *Std G:* Oh, avec – vegetables (English word used). *T:* Pardon? Avec – ? *Std G:* [Vegetables].

Table 6.2: (continued)

Three-part sequence patterns	Italian	French
6. Nontargetlike → NF → respond	(T: ...Ultima domanda. Come si dice, going to the movies? No?) (Last question. How do you say...) Std 21: Ti piace al cinema. (final word with English pronunciation.) Do you like to the movies? T: You're missing a verb. Ti piace - ? (A student near the tape says 'andare'.) Std 21: Ti piace andare al cinema? Do you like to go to the movies?	(T: Avec du lait?) (With milk?) Std A: Yes. T: Pardon? Std A: Oui.
7. Nontargetlike → NF → no chance	(T: A che ora mangi il pranzo a scuola?) (What time do you have lunch at school?) Std 1: Umm – l'uno meno venti. 1.20pm T: All' una meno venti. Si. E di solito che cosa mangi? 1.20pm. Yes. And what do you usually eat? Std 6: [hamburger].	(T: Le dîner, c'est ça! Et, d'habitude, G, d'habitude, en général, qu'est-ce tu manges pour ton dîner?) (That's it, dinner. And usually, usually, generally, what do you have for dinner?) Std G: Du salade Salad T: De la salade. Oui. - Avec quoi? Salad. Yes. With what? Std G: Oh, avec – fromage. Oh, with - cheese.
8. Nontargetlike → ignore → continue	(T: Si e cosa mangi per il piatto principale?) (What's does one eat as a main course?) Std 6(M): Pasta. T: Che tipo di pasta? What kind of pasta? Std 6: Gnocchi.	(T: La céréale. Bon. Quel genre de céréale?) (Cereal. Good. What kind of cereal? Std A: Oh, crunchy nut cornflakes. (Laughter) T: Avec du lait? With milk? Std A: Yes.
9. Nontargetlike → elicitation → respond	(T: What's' after school'?) Std D: La scuola School T: Dopo - ? After Std D: Dopo scuola	(T: ...Et, T, qu'est-ce tu as mangé hier soir? - Tu as oublié?) (What did you eat last night. – Have you forgotten Std T: I went to a restaurant. T: Ah, comment on dit ça en français? Je suis allée - How do you say this in French? ... Std T: Je suis allée au restaurant.

Teacher feedback in patterns 2 and 4 is in the form of negotiation. The examples for patterns 5-7 feature implicit NF (recasts, clarification and confirmation checks), except for the Italian example for pattern 6 which involves explicit NF. The nine patterns, therefore,

encompass the types of feedback and interactional routines described in the previous chapter and outlined in Table 5.1.

6.2.2.1 Occurrence of two-part sequence and three-part sequence patterns

An *indication* of the occurrence of the two-part and three-part sequence patterns in each of the classes studied is provided in Table 6.3. The second column (in italics) gives the frequency for the two-part sequence pattern. The remaining columns show the frequency for the three-part sequence patterns. The lesson segments from which these data were drawn varied in length from four to twelve minutes and involved similar but not identical teacher-fronted interaction Q/A activities such as 'conversations' on a theme being taught (e.g., food), review of L2 text produced by students and practice of particular vocabulary or structures. The brevity of each segment, the variation in their length and differences in the types of activities which generated the data means that figures can be only *illustrative.*

In the lesson segments on which Table 6.3[5] reports, the two-part sequence pattern occurs more often than most of the three-part sequence patterns in most of the classes. Moreover, the two-part sequence pattern occurs more often than the sum of all of the three-part sequence patterns in the data segment from four of the classes (Hibbertia and Pittosporum Primary, Eremophila and Orania Secondary). This appears to reflect the overall pattern teacher-learner interaction in Pittosporum Primary and Orania Secondary but not in the other two classes.

Examination of the data segments from the classes where the incidence of the two-part sequence was comparatively low (Sassafras Secondary and Wilga Primary, in particular) points to teacher verbal behaviour as well as the type of activity as possible factors influencing the frequency of this pattern. This is suggested by the fact that the activity from which the Sassafras Secondary class segment was drawn (as well as much of the interaction data from this class) had a communication focus. Moreover, the teacher was skilled in extending exchanges with individual learners. The teacher from Wilga Primary

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[5] The data presented in Table 6.3 is drawn from the same transcripts used for the data on the number of feedback and interactional routines presented in Table 5.2.

also expanded her exchanges with learners beyond the two-part sequence, even though the activity that was essentially a vocabulary drill.

Table 6.3: Occurrence of two and three-part sequence patterns

Class	Two-pSP	Three-pSP1	Three-pSP2	Three-pSP3	Three-pSP4	Three-pSP5	Three-pSP6	Three-pSP7	Three-pSP8	Three-pSP9
Correa P (5mins)	4	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	0
Hibbertia P [6] (7 mins)	9	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Pittosporum P (7 mins)	11	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
Wilga P (4 mins)	1	9	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0
Eremophila S (7 mins)	19	0	1	3	1	0	2	0	0	1
Orania S (9 mins)	11	4	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sassafras S (9 mins)	4	7	1	2	0	3	3	4	1	1
Acanthus S (7 mins)	12	12	0	2	0	1	1	2	2	0
Danthonia S (12 mins)	10	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	0	1
Nardoo S (7 mins)	5	5	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0

In terms of the three-part sequence patterns, Table 6.3 shows that patterns 1, 3 and 6 occurred most consistently in the lesson segments across all the classes. In other words, where learners' utterances were target-like as in patterns 1 - 4, patterns 1 and 3 consisting of feedback in the form of positive evidence or interactional routines tended to prevail over patterns 2 and 4 which involved negotiation. This is consistent with the use, by teachers, of positive evidence and interactional routines such as elicitation documented in

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[6] The segment from Hibbertia Primary class came from T-SG interaction data, as the class was working on self-access tasks during the data collection period.

the previous chapter. It also accords with the findings by Iwashita (2003) which revealed that positive evidence was the form of input NSs[7] most frequently provided the low proficiency NNSs with whom they interacted.

Where learners' utterances were nontargetlike, Table 6.3 shows that pattern 6 (the provision of NF by teachers and a response involving some form of incorporation by learners) occurred in the lesson segments from both primary and secondary classes. Patterns 5, 7, 8 and 9, however, featured mainly in the lesson segments from secondary classes. The very limited occurrence of pattern 9 raises the question of whether the pattern is particular to this set of data or more widespread, a matter that needs further investigation.

Table 6.3 suggests that teacher-learner interaction in the primary classes tended to be based on a smaller number of underlying patterns than in the secondary classes. It also highlights differences between the secondary classes. The more restricted range of patterns evident in the primary classes may be related to the nature of the activities undertaken in these classes. These activities were often more highly structured than those in the secondary classes, were extensively scaffolded by the teacher, often relied more on the use of interactional routines rather than other types of input and feedback and choral rather than individual responses. Examples of such activities included: revision of vocabulary using visual clues or games; pattern completion; identification and translation of ideas/events/vocabulary from an L2 text that the whole class had read orally or listened to the teacher read; asking other class members questions related to the topic, with the help of prompts from the teacher; and, reading a recipe in the L2 and being scaffolded by the teacher in working out the steps for making the dish involved. In other words, the activities tended to have considerably fewer conversational features than those used in the secondary classes and therefore provided fewer opportunities for these patterns to occur.

Table 6.3 indicates that interaction in Sassafras, Acanthus and Danthonia Secondary classes included all or most of the three-part sequence patterns and tended to include those involving NF to a greater extent than the other three secondary classes. These differences

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[7] Iwashita's research was not classroom-based. However, although not teachers, the NSs have some of the characteristics of teachers in that they are the linguistic experts.

may also be due to nature and focus of the activities typical in these classes and featured in the data segments. The activities were more open-ended in nature and had a communication focus, i.e., Q/A warm-up 'conversations' for the first two classes and a review and discussion of student-generated texts for the third. In contrast, activities that focused on practice and form were more typical in the other three classes featured in the lesson segments (Eremophila, Nardoo and Orania Secondary). This is consistent with the finding by Oliver and Mackey (2003) that activities with a communication focus offer more opportunities for teachers to provide NF than more form-focused activities.

The occurrence of the patterns of interaction in the classes studied included in Table 6.3 is compared with the occurrence of these patterns in the study by Oliver (2000)[8] that involved child and adult ESL learners. The two dominant patterns found by Oliver (2000) were patterns 1 and 8; 50% of teacher-fronted interaction with child learners and 41% of that with adult learners involved pattern 1 and 22.3% and 22.9% respectively involved pattern 8. The finding for pattern 1 is reflected in the current study while that for pattern 8 is not. The low frequency of patterns 2 and 4 in Oliver's data is also seen in this study. In Table 6.3, patterns 3 and 6 feature in all the classes, while patterns 5 and 7 occur only in several of the secondary classes. Oliver's data, on the other hand, shows higher frequency for patterns 5 and 7 than for patterns 3 and 6. It should be noted that the data provided by Oliver (2000, p.134, Table 2) is of a different order to that in Table 6.3, having been generated by means of statistical procedures. Nevertheless, the comparison offers insights about similarities and differences for patterns of interaction in LOTE and ESL classroom contexts.

6.2.3 Other patterns: scaffolding

A further pattern of interaction that emerged from the data has been termed a 'scaffolding pattern'. In this pattern, the teacher employs mainly L2 to build or scaffold the learners' understanding through the use of repetition, paraphrasing and elaboration. Visual clues are also used and students (individually and collectively) are encouraged to work out the

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[8] In her study, Oliver collected data from teacher-fronted lessons in child and of adult ESL classes. Oliver's child learners were aged from 6-12. The primary school learners from this research ranged in age from 10-12. The secondary learners were between 14-15 years of age, that is, somewhat closer in age to the adults.

meaning for themselves using L1. The pattern was used by several teachers when dealing with activities involving L2 written texts. The primary teachers in this study were more likely to use this pattern in reading comprehension activities than the secondary teachers. The latter tended to deal with such activities in a traditional manner, mainly using L1 to discuss or review aspects of L2 texts, as illustrated in Chapter 4. Three examples of the scaffolding pattern are now discussed: two from primary classes and one from a secondary class.

The first example comes from a lesson from Hibbertia Primary, where the teacher was helping a group of learners read a recipe for a type of sweet typically made at Christmas in France. The students had tried to understand the recipe by themselves without success and had then asked the teacher for help. The excerpt shows how the teacher and students worked collectively to deconstruct the French text and reconstruct its meaning in English. Three students from the group interact with the teacher:

> *Excerpt 3*
> 1. *T:* Ok, numéro trois. Alors, je mélange avec une cuillière -
>   *Ok, number three. Well, I stir with a spoon.*
>
> 2. *Std 2:* Stir with a spoon.
>
> 3. *T:* Oui. Je mélange avec une cuillière -
>
> 4. *Std 2:* Number four *(Attempts to read the French text.)*
>
> 5. *T:* Tu peux le lire? Lis-le en français. - Je coupe –
>   *Can you read? Read it in French. – I cut -*
>
> 6. *Std 2: (Reads the French text very softly.)*
>
> 7. *T:* Très bien. *(Teacher mimes the action)* Ok, je coupe!
>   *Very good. Ok, I cut!*
>
> 8. *Std 1:* Cut
>
> 9. *T:* Oui. Et, qu'est-ce que je coupe? Les noisettes. Alors, qu'est-ce que sont les noisettes?
>   *Yes, and what do I cut? The 'noisettes' What are 'noisettes'?*
>
> 10. *Std 3:* Almonds.

11. *T:* Nnnn - (another student calls out something)

12. *Std 1:* Hazelnuts. Cut the hazelnuts -

13. *T:* Oui. Et les amandes. - Et les amandes -
    Yes. And the almonds. – And the almonds. -
14. *Std 1:* Cut the hazelnuts –

15. *T:* Et - ?
    And -?

16. *Std 1:* and the almonds –

17. *T:* Et j'ajoute -
    And I add -

18. *Std 2:* Then put them in the bowl -

19. *T:* Et j'ajoute les noisettes, les amandes et les raisins secs.
    And I add the hazelnuts, the almonds and the raisins.

20. *Std 1:* But we're not putting raisins in?

21. *T:* No, no. I just said the recipe says to put them in all together.
    (Hibbertia Primary)

The excerpt is rather lengthy and includes exchanges involving both the IRF1 (turns 7 - 11 and 17 - 21) and the IRF2 (1 - 7 and 17 - 21) discourse structure. In turn 1, the teacher signals the step of the recipe being dealt with and reads the instruction, which is successfully interpreted for the group by Student 2. The teacher then repeats the instruction and Student 2, with encouragement, reads the relevant part of the recipe (turn 6). The teacher mimes the cutting action to get across the meaning of 'Je coupe' (turn 7), which is correctly interpreted by Student 1. In turn 9, the teacher reinforces Student 1's correct interpretation and then begins questioning the students about the kind of nuts that have to be chopped up before being added. Her non-judgemental response to the student's incorrect translation of noisettes as 'almonds', in turn 11, prompts the correct response from Student 1 (turn 12).

Between turns 13-19, the teacher uses strategic pausing to build Student 1's understanding of the text. The student's understanding of the language being used is evident in turn 20,

when she queries the teacher's inclusion of raisins in the recipe. For the first time in the whole exchange, the teacher responds in L1 in order to explain this inclusion (turn 21).

A song that the class had just listened to is the focus of interaction in the second example, which comes from Pittosporum Primary:

> *Excerpt 4*
> 1. *T:* … And the third verse you can see.   Un fiore di sole. Un fiore means -?
>
> 2. *Stds:* Flower.
>
> 3. *T:* Put it together and we mean? A sunflower. Una nuvola bianca. Something white.
>
> 4. *Stds:* A white *(indecipherable)*
>
> 5. *T:* No, a cloud. Una nuvola bianca di panna.   A white cloud *(Very quietly admonishes a student who's misbehaving.)* Una nuvola bianca di panna.
>
> 6. *Std 1:* Something white cloud.
>
> 7. *T:* Panna is cream. A creamy white cloud.   La foglia verde. A green -?
>
> 8. *Std 2:* Leaf
>
> 9. *T:* Un frago. We thought frago might be short for fragole.   E poi, facciamo la magia. E poi, primavera arriverà. Inverno, no springtime has arrived. *(Translates)* – A strawberry. And then we make magic. And then springtime will come. Winter… *(Encourages the students to guess the meaning of phrases. The students join in.)* Shall we do it again?
>
> 10. *Stds:* Yes. *(Students sing with the tape, following the words on the flip chart.)*
>
> (Pittosporum Primary)

Initially the teacher interacts with the whole group. In turns 6 - 10, the interaction is with an individual student. The teacher employs L1 as well as L2 and limits her L2 use to the specific phases she wants the students to translate. As in the previous excerpt, the teacher uses a mixture of elicitation, prompting and translation to help the students build their understanding of the words of the song. This teacher is more inclined to provide explicit correction (turn 5) than the teacher from Hibbertia Primary and to translate for the students (turns 5, 7 and 9) rather than supplying them L2 clues to enable them to arrive at

an understanding themselves. The students' responses are alternatively collective (turns 2, 4, 10) and individual (turns 6, 8).

The final example, from Sassafras Secondary, comes from a class discussion that preceded a writing task. The task required students to invent a dish that was 'disgusting' because it combined ingredients not usually put together:

> *Excerpt 5*
> 1. *T:* …What I'd like you to do today is to invent something 'dégoûtant' *(writes word on board).* Dégoûtant c'est le contraire de délicieux. Délicieux c'est le contraire de dégoûtant. *(Names a student)* Qu'est-ce que veut dire dégoûtant?
> *…Disgusting is the opposite of delicious. Delicious is the opposite of disgusting…What does 'dégoûtant' mean [in English)?*
>
> 2. *Std 3:* Err –
>
> 3. *T:* C'est un mot très près en anglais. Dégoûtant
> *It's a word that is very similar to English…*
>
> 4. *Std 4:* Disgusting.
>
> 5. *T:* Disgusting. Oui. C'est presque la même chose. Le contraire de délicieux. Oui. Alors, par exemple, du miel avec des ognions et du fromage, oui, ou bien du filets de hareng *(writes on board and repeats phrase several times),* d'un poisson. Oui, le hareng c'est un poisson, - un petit poisson, oui, mais avec du vinaigre et des ognions. Hareng - oui. Filets de hareng. Ils sont préparés avec du vinaigre et des ognions et des cornichons *(writes word on board.)* Les cornichons. Qu'est-ce que sont les cornichons? - Les cornichons, ce sont les concombres, mais plus petits. Petits concombres, oui. On les met dans le vinaigre, vinaigre. In vinegar. Oui *(draws a gherkin under the word on the board).* Il y a de petits concombres qui s'appellent les cornichons
> *…Yes. It's almost the same. The opposite is delicious. Yes. Well, for example, honey with onions and cheese, yes, or herring fillets, from a fish. Yes, herring is a fish – a little fish, but with vinegar and onions. Herring - yes. Herring fillets. It's made with vinegar and onions and gherkins. Gherkins. What are gherkins? – Gherkins, are cucumbers, but smaller. Little cucumbers. They're pickled in vinegar, vinegar…Yes…there are small cucumbers that are called gherkins.*
>
> 6. *Std 5:* They're cucumbers. *(The teacher appears not to hear.)*

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7. *T:* Tu te souviens comment ils s'appellent en anglais *(Names a student)*?
   Do you remember what they're called in English?

8. *Std 6:* Oh yeah.

9. *T:* Oui, de petits cornichons, little cucumbers - they're cut thin and put in your hamburger. Most people take them out, les cornichons. Ok. Du filets de hareng avec des cornichons et puis on a de la confiture.
   ...Ok. Herring fillets with gherkins and then one has jam)

10. *Stds:* Yuk.

11. *T:* De la confiture avec des cornichons, c'est dégoûtant!
    Jam with gherkins, it's disgusting!

    (Sassafras Secondary, 20 Aug)

In this excerpt, as in excerpts 3 and 4, the teacher elicits students' understanding of the L2 information presented to them by getting their responses in L1. The teacher relies on linguistic rather than visual clues to promote comprehension, repeating key words, paraphrasing and elaborating on L2 word and phrases that she was trying to get students to understand. She also provides metalinguistic comment in L2 to aid student understanding. This is seen in turn 1 where the teacher explains the meaning of 'dégoûtant' by giving its antonym and in turn 3, where she comments on the similarity of the French word 'dégoûtant' to its English equivalent. Paraphrasing and elaboration to promote comprehension are particularly extended in turn 5 where the teacher relies exclusively on L2 to explain 'filets de hareng' and 'cornichons'. In each case, the teacher makes the connection between these items and the related, but more general categories of fish and cucumbers to help students understand the linguistic input provided. Somewhat uncharacteristically for this teacher, the discourse structure is IRF1, as she interacts with four different students in succession. The provision of extended input in L2 that is a feature of this excerpt was very typical of the way the teacher from Sassafras Secondary supported her students' learning. It reflects an assertion she makes (see Chapter 8) that she attempted to immerse her students in L2 as much as possible.

6.3 Patterns of interaction and learners' language production

As is evident from the data examined in the previous chapter, individual learner's L2 language production in the context of teacher-learner interaction was usually neither extended nor unpredictable. It ranged from a single word or phrase to a single clause sentence. A typical example of the language produced by a secondary student in a classroom Q/A conversation follows:

Excerpt 6

1. *T:* Oui, hier soir. - Qu'est-ce tu as mangé - pour ton dîner?
   Yes, yesterday evening – what did you eat for your dinner?

2. *Std C:* - Du poulet.
   Chicken.

3. *T:* Du poulet. Du poulet rôti?
   Chicken. Roast chicken?

4. *Std C:* Oui.
   Yes.

5. *T:* Avec quoi?
   With what?

6. *Std C:* - Salad.

7. *T:* De la salade. Qu'est-ce que tu as dans la salade? La laitue?
   Salad. What was in your salad? Lettuce?

8. *Std C:* Oui, fromage
   Yes, cheese.

9. *T:* Du fromage? Du fromage blanc? Du fromage normale. Oui?
   Cheese? White cheese? Ordinary cheese. Yes?

10. *Std C:* - I don't know the word for 'capsicum'.

11. *T:* Ah, who knows the word for capsicum?

12. *Std P:* Les poivrons.

13. *T:* Les poivrons. Les poivrons. Les poivrons verts ou rouges?
    Capsicums. Capsicums. Green or red capsicums?

14. *Std C:* Verts
    Green.

                                        (Sassafras Secondary)

Turns 2, 4, 8 and 14 in this excerpt show what Student C can easily do in L2 - respond very briefly and correctly to the teacher's questions. Turns 6 and 10 illustrate his difficulties. Turn 10 is the more illuminating example because it highlights that Student C's problem is both linguistic and communicative. He does not know the French word for 'capsicum'; more importantly, however, he does not appear able to use L2 to express his linguistic needs and thus get assistance from the teacher – in other words, negotiate for meaning. The teacher's response in turn 11 is in L1 and only addresses the simpler linguistic problem by asking someone else to supply the unknown word. This is provided by Student P. The exchange continues after turn 14 for another 5 turns with Student C giving the same one or two word responses in L2. The level of L2 linguistic production demonstrated by Student C is fairly typical of that of secondary students participating in this kind of T-C activity. Also typical is the use of L1 by both student and teacher to deal with communication difficulties.

Teacher-class interaction in the primary classes did not include examples of the more open-ended Q/A 'conversations'. However, these sometimes occurred in T-SG interaction. The next excerpt, where the teacher is asking a student about the contents of a special hamburger he has drawn, following a class reading of the McDonald's menu, illustrates this:

> *Excerpt 7*
> 1. *T:* Ciao. Cosa c'è nell' amburger?
>   *Hello. What's in the hamburger?*
>
> 2. *Std:* Pardon?
>
> 3. *T:* Cosa c'è nell'amburger? C'è lattuga? Pomodoro? Cetriolo?
>   *What's in the hamburger? Is there lettuce? Tomatoes? Cucumber?*
>
> 4. *Std:* No.
>
> 5. *T:* Formaggio?
>   *Cheese?*
>
> 6. *Std:* Yes.
>
> 7. *T:* Quanto? Una fetta, due fette, quattro fette?
>   *How much? A slice, two slices, four slices?*

8. *Std:* Four.

9. *T:* Due fette di formaggio. *(Possibly the teacher has misheard the child.)*
    Che cos'altro c'é?
    Two slices of cheese. ... What else is there?

10. *Std:* [Ha] –
    It has –

11. *T:* Prosciutto, mortadella, salame, manzo?
    Ham, mortadella, salami, beef?

12. *Std:* Pollo.
    Chicken.

13. *T:* Una fetta, due fette?
    On slice, two slices?

14. *Std:* [Due].
    Two.

15. *T:* Due fette. E prosciutto?
    Two slices. And ham?

16. *Std:* Pane.
    Bread.

17. *T:* Una fetta morbida?
    A soft slice?

18. *Std:* No.

19. *T:* Sottoaceti?
    Pickled vegetables?

20. *Std:* No.

21. *T:* Barbabietola? Sottoaceti? Pancetta?
    Beetroot? Pickled vegetables? Bacon?

22. *Std:* Mela torta.
    Apple cake.

23. *T:* Con frutta?
    With fruit.

24. *Std:* Mele.
    Apples.

<div style="text-align: right">

(Wilga Primary)

</div>

This rather long excerpt is included in full because it illustrates how the student moves from responding in L1 in turns 2, 4, 6 and 8, to responding in L2 in turns 10, 12, 14, 16, 22 and 24. Of greatest interest are his responses in turns 12 and 16, where he ignores the teacher's suggestions and offers his own answer and, especially, his literal attempt to say 'apple pie' in Italian in turn 22. Primary students were more likely than to use L1 than L2 in exchanges such as excerpt 7. Responses in L2 by primary students, like those of many secondary students, usually consisted of one or two words. It is interesting to speculate, in relation to excerpt 7, how influential the teacher's persistence in employing L2 was in stimulating the student's own use of that code and his attempt to use it creatively in turn 22.

Excerpts 6 and 7 illustrate the kind of language production that appeared to be typical of the students from the classes in this study when engaged in interaction with the teacher. Students could respond briefly in L2 to questions but did not appear to be able to use L2 for simple negotiation in a communication breakdown. The excerpts show that the difference in language production between primary and secondary students did not appear to be particularly marked. They also point again to the crucial role of the teacher's linguistic behaviour in facilitating students' use of L2.

The influence of patterns of interaction on learners' language production within teacher-learner interaction is examined in two ways: (1) participation; and, (2) the production of modified output in response to teacher feedback. The term, participation, is used in the sense described by van Lier (1998) when discussing the 'participation orientation' of the IRF. In this orientation "the teacher is concerned primarily with engaging and maintaining the students' attention, and drawing them into the discussion actively" (van Lier, 1998, p. 155). Participation, therefore, refers to the extent of the student's attention to and active involvement in interactive exchanges.

Examination of the data suggests that learners' language production in terms of both participation and modified output was influenced, in the first instance, by the discourse structure of an exchange. It was demonstrated in the previous chapter and in excerpts 1

and 2 above, that interaction involving the IRF1 discourse structure does not provide an opportunity for participation beyond the initial response. The reason for this appears to be the nature of teachers' feedback in the third turn, including teachers signaling the end of the exchange by directing attention to a different learner. Thus it appears that the two-part sequence pattern of interaction that is associated with the IRF1 discourse structure limits learner production.

The IRF2 discourse structure, on the other hand, allows for the emergence of the three-part sequence patterns. These patterns increase the opportunities for learner participation and, depending on the type of teacher feedback, may stimulate students to produce modified output. Table 6.3 suggests that the three-part sequence patterns of interaction more likely to feature in the teacher-learner interaction from the classes in this study were patterns 1, 3 and 6. In patterns 1 and 3, where the learner's utterance was target-like or incomplete, the teacher's response in the form of positive evidence promoted learner participation by continuing the exchange and thereby encouraging a further response from the learner. In pattern 6, where the learner's utterance was nontargetlike, the NF given by the teacher prompted the learner to modify his/her output and thereby extend the cycle of the exchange. This NF tended to be in the form of explicit correction, clarification requests or confirmation checks rather than recasts. Recasts were more likely to be associated with pattern 7, where the learner had no chance to incorporate NF, as the teacher tended to immediately follow a recast with another question that continued the pre-existing dialogue.

One of the characteristics of the IRF2 discourse structure in the data from this study is the extended nature of the exchanges between the teacher and individual learner, as in excerpts 6 and 7. In the context of LOTE classes, where learners have low levels of proficiency, extending participation *per se* may be an important facet of the interaction process as it increases the input available to learners and may also increase the opportunity for the occurrence of interactional moves that promote language learning. The scaffolding pattern described earlier in this chapter also seemed to help extend learner participation through the development of comprehension, as was shown in excerpts 3-5 above. The

effect of such extended participation on language learning in the LOTE classroom context needs further investigation, as its contribution may have been underestimated. Some work in this direction has been carried out by Ohta (2001), who analysed the interaction of beginning learners of Japanese drawing on concepts of audience roles and private speech.

Ohta (2001) pointed out that learners may have three roles: the role of *addressee* (i.e., to whom utterances are actually addressed); the role of *auditor* (i.e., a participant in an interaction and a potential addressee); and the role of *overhearer* (i.e., someone who is in a position to overhear the interaction of others but is not a potential participant). Ohta (2001) underscored the fact that speakers, including teachers, design their utterances for both *addressees*[9] and *auditors*. In the teacher-learner interaction context, learners in a class to whom the teacher's utterances are not specifically directed at a particular point in time may still participate indirectly by taking on the role of either *auditor* or *overhearer* and therefore remain within the interactional loop. An example of this from the data from this study is given in the next excerpt:

> *Excerpt 8*
> 1. *T: (Names a student)*, hai scritto qualcosa?
>   *...have you written something?*
>
> 2. *Std 1: (Indecipherable- in English.)*
>
> 3. *T:* In italiano! – Non ho ancora finito. Non ho ancora finito. Student 2, hai scritto? *(Indecipherable - in English.)* - Ready. Va bene. Get your neighbour to help you out. *(Indecipherable. Mixture of English and Italian)* – Si, benissimo. Allora Student 3, per piacere, tu che cosa hai scritto oggi? Tu sei stata in vacanza, allora, naturalmente – alle vacanze – e spero che tu abbia scritto qualcosa riguardo alle vacanze. Si? Hai scritto qualcosa delle tue vacanze?
>   *In Italian! – I haven't finished yet. I haven't finished yet. Student 2, finished?...OK...Yes, very good. Student 3 then, please, what have you written today? You've been on holidays, then naturally – on holidays – I hope you've written something about your holidays. Yes? Have you written something about your holidays?*
>
> 4. *Std 3:* Si, ma non ho finito.
>   *Yes, but I haven't finished.*

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[9] In the classroom context an addressee can be an individual student, a group of students or the whole class.

5. *T:* Va bene. Aspetto allora. Presto, presto. Non scrivere un saggio. Scrivi una frase importante. Va bene. Subito, per piacere. -   Student 4, hai finito?
   OK. I'll wait then. Hurry, hurry. Don't write an essay. Write one key sentence. OK. Immediately, please. Student 4, have you finished?

6. *Std 4:* Non ho ancora finito.
   I haven't finished yet.

7. *T:* Bravo. A nice sentence.
   (Nardoo Secondary)

In this excerpt, the teacher's provision of 'Non ho ancora finito' to Student 1 at the beginning of turn 3, may have been picked up by Students 3 and 4 in the roles of auditors or overhearers. Student 3 (turn 4) modifies it slightly by adding in 'ma' (but), replying to the teacher's question 'Hai scritto qualcosa delle tue vacanze?' with 'Si, ma non ho finito.' In turn 6, Student 4 repeats the teacher's original sentence verbatim.

Ohta (2001) acknowledged that the learner's role affects the level of attentiveness, with the addressee role demanding the highest level of attention. However, she argued and provided evidence to show that learners could utilise what they heard as overhearers as well as in the other two roles, which is what seems to have occurred with Students 3 and 4 in excerpt 8.

Students' use of private speech[10] also provides evidence of participation in the interaction process as either *auditors* or *overhearers*. The use of private speech was not a particular focus of this study. However, instances of it were unexpectedly found in data from several of the classes. Two examples are given below:

Excerpt 9
1. *T:* In a hotel. Ok. Ok Avete avuto dei problemi?   What's this one asking? Ok Siete stati, siete stati o avete dormito in un albergo o una pensione e avete avuto dei problemi?
   ...Have you had problems?... Have you been, have you been or slept in a hotel or pensione and had problems?

---

[10] "In private speech learners carve out their own interactive space, produce a response that is not intended for a listener. These self-addressed turns are usually uttered with reduced volume when the learner is not the addressee, although learners also used private speech to formulate their own public turns" (Ohta, 2001, p. 154).

2. *Std 3: (nearest the tape, answers to herself)* Had any problems?

3. *T:* Have you had any problems? Tell me if you had any problems?

4. *Std 4:* Not in Italy.

(*Danthonia Secondary*)

In the excerpt above, the teacher was quizzing the class about a L2 text they had read. In turn 1, the teacher directs the question to Student 4, who appears to have had difficulty in comprehending it. Simultaneously, Student 3 translates the key idea for herself *sotto voce* (turn 2), participating indirectly in the interaction as an *auditor* and, through the use of private speech, showing that she had understood the question. As the exchange between the teacher and Student 4 was part of an activity in which the whole class was engaged, Student 3's participation was as an auditor.

Another example of student participation via private speech is provided in the next excerpt:

Excerpt 10
1. *T:* He's asked you to go to the bank.

2. *Std 2:* Pharmacy.

3. *T:* I'm sorry, pharmacy. So we have *(The teacher writes Student 2's sentence on the board).*   Then you're going to say 'c'est à gauche', c'est à droite. OK? So who's going to be asked the next question? Let her decide where she wants to get to.

4. *Std 3: (Near microphone, repeats the place words to himself, pronouncing them very well.)* La banque, la pharmacie, le café, le supermarché, la boulangerie.
    The bank, the chemist, the café, the supermarket, the bakery.

5. *Std 4:* au café.

(*Correa Primary*)

In this excerpt, the teacher facilitates student practice of direction-giving. While Student 4 decides where she wants to go, Student 3, in the role of *overhearer,* recites *sotto voce* the names of the places that could be mentioned (turn 4). Both excerpts 9 and 10 show that students not interacting directly with the teacher during a teacher-fronted whole-class

activity may nevertheless be participating in an active manner in the role of *auditor/overhearer* and demonstrate this via private speech.

6.4 Summary and discussion

This chapter addressed the research question 'What is the nature and pattern of interaction in LOTE classes?' and concentrates, in particular, on patterns of interaction. Examination of the data revealed that teacher-learner interaction in the classes studied included a number of patterns and suggested a relationship between these patterns and the two versions of the IRF discourse structure. The two-part sequence pattern was found in data from most of the classes and was associated with the IRF1 discourse structure. The three-part sequence patterns identified by Oliver (2000), together with a ninth pattern, were also found in data from most of the classes and were associated with the IRF2 discourse structure. The other pattern to emerge from the data from several classes was a scaffolding pattern, which tended to be associated with activities based on L2 written texts.

Analysis of a segment of the IRF2 data from each class identified patterns 1 (correct → continue → continue), 3 (incomplete → continue →continue) and 6 (nontargetlike → NF → respond) as the three-part sequence patterns most likely to underpin the teacher-learner interaction in all of the classes. Patterns 1 and 3 were associated with the use of teacher input consisting of positive evidence. Pattern 6 was associated with teacher feedback involving both implicit and explicit NF. The analysis also suggested that teacher-learner interaction in secondary classes tended include a greater range of patterns than in primary classes. This was especially evident in three of the secondary classes where the activities used were more open-ended and had a communication focus.

The overall picture that emerges from current research about the patterns of interaction in the classes studied is consistent with the kinds of feedback and interactional routines shown to be used by teachers in Chapter 5. These included NF, but also featured considerable use of positive evidence and frequent use of interactional routines, especially non-corrective repetition and elicitation. The picture is also consistent with the low proficiency level of learners in these classes and with the use of tasks and activities that

tended to focus on providing structured practice, even when communicative in orientation. However, as the teacher-learner interaction from the three secondary classes that featured the widest range of patterns suggests, the nature of the activities and tasks involved may influence the patterns of interaction. Other factors that may contribute to this picture are teacher beliefs about the nature of language learning and limitations of teacher knowledge about the kind of interaction that research suggests facilitates learning. The influence of these factors is explored in detail in Chapter 8.

The teacher-learner interaction data examined revealed that the quantity and nature of learners' language production tended to be very limited. The influence of patterns of interaction on this language production was considered both in terms of extending the amount of learner participation and modification of output by learners. Predictably, teacher-learner interaction based on three-part sequence patterns and associated with the IRF2 discourse structure resulted in extended exchanges that also provided learners with opportunities to modify their output. The data relating to the three-part sequence patterns as well as the scaffolding pattern highlight their role in promoting learner participation, in particular.

The focus of this and the previous chapter has been teacher-learner interaction. The next chapter examines the interaction between learners themselves.

CHAPTER 7
LEARNER-LEARNER INTERACTION

7.1 Introduction

The nature and impact of learner-learner interaction has received increasing attention in second language learning research in recent years. This attention has been further stimulated by a number of experimental, quasi-experimental and descriptive research studies that have investigated NNS-NNS interaction in a range of contexts and identified learner-learner interaction as an important site for language learning. Some of these studies have concentrated on determining the contribution of various types of feedback[1] on language development as part of learner-learner interaction (Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Mackey, Oliver & Leeman, 2003; Mackey & Philp, 2002; Oliver, 1995, 1998, 2000). Others have been more interested in describing how learners respond to and help each other as part of collaborative activities undertaken in the classroom or as part of classroom-related studies and/or evaluating the effect of these behaviours (Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Brooks, Donato & McGlone, 1997; Donato, 1994; Foster, 1998; Ohta, 2000, 2001; Platt & Brooks, 1994; Storch, 2002; Swain, 1995, 2000, 2002; Swain & Lapkin, 1996, 1998; Williams, 1999, 2000). While both sets of studies cited above encompass adult and child, ESL and foreign language learners from both classroom and experimental settings, none of them deals with learners from 'conventional' school LOTE classes. This chapter describes learner-learner interaction in that particular classroom context. The chapter begins with a description of the nature of the tasks from which the data for analysis were drawn, explains how the data were analysed, then presents and discusses the findings of the analysis.

7.2 Classification of activities and tasks

For technical reasons, the data collected from the ten 'conventional' primary and secondary LOTE classes investigated as part of this research were of variable quality. The limitations of the recording equipment, classroom acoustics and the fact that twenty or more students were speaking at the same time meant that a considerable amount of the

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[1] Especially negative feedback.

data obtained were fragmentary and discontinuous. The most useable data came from pair and group work activities and tasks listed in the 'form' and 'meaning' focus areas of Table 4.2, Chapter 4. Data from pair work were generally of better quality than those from group work.

As indicated in Chapter 3, to facilitate analysis, the pair and group work activities and tasks were classified according to two categories taken from Ellis (2001):

- functional language practice; and,
- focused communicative tasks.

Ellis (2001, p. 20) defines functional language practice (FLP) as "instructional materials that provide learners with the opportunity to practice producing the target structure in some kind of situational context" and notes that, although the activities involved appear to concentrate on meaning, "the primary focus remains on form, and learners are aware that the purpose is to master accurate use through repeated use of the target feature." The particular activities analysed were:

FLP1.   Pair work where students ask each other questions on a predetermined topic such as daily routines - in other words, question and answer practice using targeted vocabulary and structures, including survey type activities.

FLP2.   Pair or group work where students describe an item, person or a picture to each other using targeted vocabulary and/or structures.

FLP3.   Pair or group work where students engage in role play either based on a model dialogue or involving a situation which requires them to use familiar and well-rehearsed language.

Students were supported in completion of these activities by written models of the structures and vocabulary they needed to use provided on worksheets, in textbooks or environmental print.

On the other hand, Ellis described focused communicative tasks (CT) as "designed to elicit production of a specific target feature in the context of performing a communicative task" (Ellis 2001, p. 21). They differ from communicative tasks, in general, in that learners are required to use some feature of language that has been specifically targeted.

What distinguishes them from functional language practice activities is their primary focus on meaning rather than on form. The activities from which the data for analysis were drawn were:

CTI.   Pair work where students engage in one or two-way information gap tasks.

CT2.   Pair or group work where students work collaboratively to construct text e.g., list questions to ask exchange students who will visit the class in the future; develop an argument for their side for a debate; create a role play; prepare part of a procedural text such as a recipe; list the ingredients of an imaginary dish.

It should be noted that CTI tasks were used in one primary and two secondary classes and that most of the data came from students in the primary and one secondary class. CT2 tasks were not often used in the primary classes and most of the data for this type of task was from secondary students. Students had similar forms of written support for these two categories of tasks as for functional language practice.

7.3 Analysis

The overall analysis of the activities and tasks just described was guided by students' choice of language. As functional language practice (FLP) 1-3 and focused communicative tasks (CT) 1 were usually carried out mainly in L2, analysis of L-L interaction carried out through these tasks was based on the framework used for examination of teacher-fronted interaction (see Chapter 5, Table 5.1). The findings from this analysis are described and discussed in section 7.3 below.

In contrast, examination of the data associated with CT2 revealed that interaction that involved collaboration between pairs or groups of learners to produce a text in L2 occurred mainly in L1. The predominant use of L1 meant the interaction could not be meaningfully analysed using the framework described above. Instead, following the work of Swain and Lapkin (2000) and others, Language–related Episodes (LREs)[2] were used to examine the extent and impact of L1 use in L-L interaction (Brooks & Swain, 2001;

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[2] Language-related Episodes are defined as any part of a dialogue where the students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use or correct themselves or others (Swain, 1995).

Lesser, 2004; Swain, 1995, 2000; Swain & Lapkin 1996, 1998, 2002; Williams, 1999, 2001).

The LREs were categorised according their focus, following Swain and Lapkin (2002):

- lexis or individual items of vocabulary;
- form or aspects of grammar; and,
- discourse or how text is structured.

The types of interaction associated with LREs were identified using the following adaptation of the categories developed by Williams (1999), as the starting point for analysis:

- learner requests to each other about language;
- learner-learner metatalk;
- other-correction;
- learner-initiated requests to the teacher about language; and,
- interactional moves and routines between learners.

Williams' (1999, p. 596) category of "learner initiated requests to another learner about language" was modified to "learner requests to each other about language". This description better reflects the fact that the data examined came from pair or group work tasks, which by definition, produce requests that are learner-initiated. The category of "learner-learner negotiation over a language item" was replaced by 'interactional moves and routines between learners' to more accurately reflect the range of interaction in L1 occurring between learners. The findings from the analysis of L-L interaction conducted mainly in L1 are described and discussed in section 7.4 below.

Approximately 50% of the data of L-L interaction occurring mainly in L1 were coded by the researcher and a second trained rater for each language (French and Italian near native speakers were used) for the occurrence of LREs focusing on lexis, form and discourse and for the five types of interaction described above. The reliability of the coding was calculated using simple percentage agreement (i.e., the coding of the two raters was

compared) for each of the categories. The results for the French data were 89% for the LREs and 100% for the types of interaction. For the Italian data, the results were 97% for the LREs and 92% for the types of interaction. The classification of LREs dealing with spelling as having a form rather than lexis focus was the cause of most of the differences in coding between the researcher and the rater of the French data.

7.4 Learner-learner interaction mainly in L2

This section describes and discusses the feedback and interaction found in functional language practice (FLP) 1-3 and focused communicative tasks (CT) 1, that is, those carried out mainly in L2. The functional language practice activities included Q/A drills, surveys, describing items in a picture to a partner and role plays using a model dialogue. The focused communication tasks were one and two-way information gap tasks.

Similar types of feedback and interactional routines were found in the functional language practice activities and focused communicative tasks. The limited proficiency of the students involved in this study and their reliance on written models to complete oral tasks meant that a lot of the interaction consisted of students reproducing and/or manipulating targeted structures and vocabulary provided in model sentence/questions or dialogues, regardless of the type of activity or task. On the other hand, exchanges also occurred in functional language practice activities as well as focused communicative tasks where students provided each other with various forms of negative feedback and positive evidence. Interestingly, in the data available, the occurrence of moves involving some form of negotiated interaction seemed to be influenced by the dynamic between pairs or groups of learners as well as the nature of the task. Thus, some learners engaged in negotiated interaction and some did not, regardless of the type of task they were completing. Excerpts from the data that illustrate the occurrence of interactional routines and different types of feedback are discussed, first in relation to functional language practice activities, and then in relation to focused communicative activities. The influence of task and interpersonal dynamics are also considered in the discussion.

7.4.1 Functional language practice

The data examined are drawn from Q/A drills, surveys, description of items in a picture to a partner and role plays using a model dialogue. The first excerpt discussed is taken from a Q/A drill where Year 10 students question each other about their daily routines, using reflexive verbs. The focus of the interaction is on producing and reproducing identified structures, as required by the task. Neither student deviates from the set script and nor do they actually need to do so to complete the activity.

> *Excerpt 1[3]*
> 1. *Std D:* Tu te réveilles à quelle heure?
>   *At what time do you wake up?*
>
> 2. *Std C:* Je me reveille à sept heures.
>   *I wake up at seven o'clock.*
>
> 3. *Std D:* A quelle heure tu te lèves?
>   *At what time do you get up?*
>
> 4. *Std C:* Je me lève à sept heures.
>   *I get up at seven o'clock.*
>
> 5. *Std D:* A quelle heure est-ce que tu t'habilles?
>   *At what time do you get dressed?*
>
> 6. *Std C:* Je m'habille - à huit heures.
>   *I get dressed at eight o'clock.*
>   *(Orania Secondary)*

This pair continued in this fashion for most of the duration of the recording of their work on this activity, only breaking their flow to respond to a query from another student.

The interactional routine of drilling is also evident in the next excerpt, where the two students are practising how to purchase a train ticket:

> *Excerpt 2*
> 1. *Std 1:* umm – Ok, uno per Venezia andata e ritorno.
>   *umm – Ok, a return ticket to Venice.*
>
> 2. *Std 2:* Due per - Pisa, andata e ritorno – prima classe.
>   *Two- first class return tickets - to Pisa.*

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[3] Teacher and learner errors in audio recordings are reproduced in the excerpts from the lesson transcriptions included in this chapter.

3. *Std 1:* Una per Bologna andata e ritorno.
   A return ticket to Bologna.

4. *Std 2:* Una per - una per - Sicily andata e ritorno, seconda classe.
   A - a - second class return ticket - to Sicily.

5. *Std 1:* Oh, alright, Ok. Cinque per -
   Five tickets to –

6. *Std 2:* - Venezia.
   Venice

7. *Std 1:(ignores suggestion)* Cinque per, cinque per Milano – Milano. Cinque
   per Milano, andata e ritorno uumm prima classe.
   Five tickets for Milan - Milan. Five uumm first class return tickets to Milan.
   (Danthonia Secondary)

In the first four turns the learners seem to operate as independent entities, just producing their respective utterances. There is a slight change in turns 5 and 6, when Student 1 gives feedback in the form of reinforcement in L1 ('Oh, alright, Ok.') and Student 2 then responds to her pause after 'Cinque per-' by supplying the name of a city to complete the utterance. Student 1, on the other hand, appears to ignore the prompt and emphasises her own choice of city by repeating it several times, before completing her utterance.

In excerpt 3, Students A and B are completing the same activity as the pair in excerpt 1. Interestingly, their interaction goes beyond mechanical practice of the required structures when Student A takes on the role of the teacher or expert, which occurs in turns 3, 5, 9 and 13:

Excerpt 3
1. *Std A:* Er, tu prends le petit déjeuner à quelle heure?
   Er, at what time do you have breakfast?

2. *Std B:* Je me le -
   I ge –

3. *Std A:* [You've got to wash yourself first + *other indecipherable comments
   in English*] A quelle heure tu te laves?
   At what time do you wash yourself?

4. *Std B:* Je me lave - à sept heures -
   I wash myself at seven o'clock –

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5. *Std A:* et quart. Tu prends le petit déjeuner à quelle heure?
   quarter past. At what time do you have breakfast?

6. *Std B:* Je prends le petit déjeuner à - huit heures. *(Query in English about use of 'à quelle heure'- indecipherable)*
   I have breakfast at – eight o'clock.

7. *Std A:* A quelle heure est-ce que tu quittes la maison?
   At what time to you leave home?

8. *Std B:* A quelle heure est-ce que tu quittes la maison?
   At what time do you leave home?

9. *Std A:* No that's the question. You have to answer it.

10. *Std B:* Je quitte - la maison à huit heures [et] quart.
    I leave home at a quarter past eight.

11. *Std A:* A quelle heure est-ce que tu te couches?
    At what time do you go to bed?

12. *Std B:* Oh, je me couche à, à quatre heures – *(indecipherable)*
    I go to bed at four o'clock.

13. *Std A:* One o'clock? *(indecipherable)*
                              (Orania Secondary)

In turn 3, Student A responds to her partner's attempted answer to her initial question by acknowledging the need to begin earlier in the daily routine sequence and adjusting her question to: *At what time do you wash yourself?* In turn 5, Student A uses positive evidence to continue the exchange, firstly by completing Student's B's utterance with *quarter past* and then by asking the next question. In turn 9, Student A corrects Student B for repeating rather than answering her question, which prompts Student B to reformulate her utterance. Finally, in turn 13, Student A uses a clarification request in L1 to query her partner's statement that she went to bed at four o'clock. There was also discussion between the partners in turn 6 about the expression, 'à quelle heure'. However, it was difficult to determine who initiated the discussion and its outcome. Significantly, three of the four instances of negotiated interaction occurred in L1.

Getting learners to survey class members on a particular topic is a more 'real life' way of providing them with opportunities to interact using a question and answer format. The survey activity, included in one of the lessons from Sassafras Secondary, required students to find out from ten of their peers what they liked to do during the holidays, using the structure, 'Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire pendant les vacances?' Both the structure and possible responses had been practised before the students undertook the survey activity and support was available to them on a worksheet, so the task was not difficult. Some of the students approached the activity light-heartedly, including a lot of interpersonal banter in L1 during their interaction, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

> *Excerpt 4*
> 1. *Std B:* Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire pendant les vacances?
>   *What do you like to do during the holidays?*
>
> 2. *Std A:* Pendant les vacances j'aime faire des promenades à vélo avec mon ami – *(snigger from questioner)* mon ami.
>   *During the holidays I like to go bike riding with my friend – my friend.*
>
> 3. *Std B:* Your friend!
>
> 4. *Std A:* Why do you say that! *(Laughter and protestations)* Shut up.
>
> 5. *Std B:* Alors, sorry. - Ok.
>   *Well,*
>
>   (Sassafras Secondary)

At the same time, the more open-ended nature of the activity resulted in exchanges that involved genuine interactional moves, as well as those where students simply reproduced pre-fabricated chunks of well rehearsed language. Excerpt 5 is an example of the former:

> *Excerpt 5*
> 1. *Std O:* Qu'est-ce faire, tu aller faire pendant les vacances?
>   *What are you to do, going to do during the holidays?*
>
> 2. *Std M:* Pendant les vacances, j'aime aller à la plage et à la montagne
>   *During the holidays I like to go to the beach and to the mountains.*
>
> 3. *Std O:* Montagne?
>   *Mountain?*

4. *Std M:* Mountains. Visit the mountains. - Et aussi rendre visite à mes grands-parents.
   ...- and also visit my grandparents.
<div align="right">*(Sassafras Secondary)*</div>

In the above excerpt, it appears that Student O has difficulty in understanding the final phrase of Student M's answer to her initial question. In response, Student O seeks clarification by repeating 'Montagne?' with a rising intonation (turn 3). Student M elucidates by translating, first the word, then the whole phrase.

Excerpt 6 provides further illustration of the use of interactional moves such as elicitation and clarification requests in the context of this activity:

Excerpt 6
1. *Std M:* Que'est-ce que *(laughter)* tu aimes faire pendant les vacances?
   What do you like to do during the holidays?

2. *Std P:* Pendant les vacances .. um … j'aime faire du sport.
   During the holidays… I like to play sport.

3. *Std M:* Mais -
   But…

4. *Std P:* Mais je préfère du batik
   I prefer batik.

5. *Std M:* Batik?
   Batik?

6. *Std P:* J'aime aussi rendre visite à mes grands-parents (English pronunciation).
   I also like to go and see my grandparents.

7. *Std M:* Visite… *(laughter)* … C'est tout?
   See… is that all?

8. *Std P*: Ah, oui, c'est tout.
   Yes, that's all.

9. *Std M:* OK, Merci beaucoup. Au revoir
   Many thanks. Bye.
<div align="right">*(Sassafras Secondary)*</div>

In turn 3 Student M uses elicitation to encourage Student S to elaborate his statement a little further. Following his response, Student M tries to clarify Student P's use of the word 'batik' (turn 5). It is possible that the word was meant to be 'bateau' ('I prefer boating') as this makes more sense in the context. However, Student P ignores the clarification request and continues to elaborate his response (turn 6). Finally, in turn 7 Student M gives Student P an opportunity to conclude the exchange by asking, 'C'est tout?' Student P responds in the affirmative and M formally closes the interaction with 'Many thanks' and 'Bye'.

Most of the interactional moves in excerpts 5 and 6 were in L2. However, the instinctive tendency appeared to be for students to use L1 for this purpose. This is illustrated in turn 2 in the next excerpt. Here Student B seems to misunderstand the expression, 'faire des promenades à vélo' and makes a clarification request in L1. Interestingly, Student R's response is also in L1, in the form of a translation of the phrase not understood:

> *Excerpt 7*
> 1. *Std R:* J'aime faire des promenades à vélo
>   *I like to ride a bike.*
>
> 2. *Std B:* You like to walk where?
>
> 3. *Std R:* Bike ride avec mon ami. Bike ride with a friend.
>   *(Sassafras Secondary)*

In the next excerpt, a pair of students from an Italian primary class is completing a functional language practice activity where they describe to each other the clothing worn by people in a picture they have each been given:

> *Excerpt 8*
> 1. *Std A:* Ready. La gonna - la gonna - è nera e bianca. La maglietta - la maglietta rossa - e bianca e nera.
>   *The dress – the dress – is red and white. The jumper – the jumper red – and white and black.*
>
> 2. *Std B:* -
>
> 3. *Std A:* La maglietta -
>   *The jumper –*

4. *Std B: - La maglietta è nera. umm*
   The jumper is black.

5. *Std A:* I pantaloni -
   The trousers –

6. *Std B:* I pantaloni – [rossa]. - Le scarpe - rossa - nere. La maglietta blù.
   The red- trousers - The – red – black shoes. The blue jumper.

7. *Std A:* La maglia è arancia e la maglietta, la maglietta - è nero. La gonna è - la gonna - nero. Le calze è nero.
   The vest is orange and the jumper, the jumper is black. The dress is – the dress – black. The socks is black.

8. *Std B:* La maglietta verde. La calze nero. I pantaloni *(indecipherable).* La gonna – la gonna è rossa.
   The green jumper. The black socks. The trousers…. The dress – the dress is red.

(Wilga Primary)

This excerpt features interactional moves by Student A, who takes on an expert role when her partner has difficulties with the task or with particular utterances. In turns 3 and 5, she successfully elicits a response from her partner by providing the initial prompt and then strategically pauses, thus enabling Student B to complete her description. In contrast, in turns 6 - 8 each student seems to be concentrating on producing parallel utterances, rather then responding to what the other is actually saying. Both students omit verbs and have difficulty making nouns and adjectives agree. However, neither provides feedback to the other about this. Ignoring errors can be a feature of exchanges that focus on meaning. It could also be due to the fact that these errors were not especially salient to the learners at this stage of their learning or in this particular context.

Role play activities based on model dialogues which require students to substitute selected vocabulary with indicated items were used in two of the secondary French classes. Predictably, simple reproduction of the model provided, with appropriate substitution of indicated items featured prominently in the resulting interaction. This was the case with the pair of learners featured in excerpts 9 - 11 (substituted items are in bold) who generally stayed within the confines of the model presented to them[4]. However, as the

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[4] The text in this and other excerpts includes learner errors.

discussion of these excerpts illustrates, their exchanges included a few genuine interactional moves. The performance of the activity also seemed to stimulate one of the students to generate a couple of her own utterances:

> *Excerpt 9*
> 1. *Std A:* Je voudrais **une chambre - à une lit et avec une bain** – s'il vous plaît. Je voudrais **quatre-vingts** francs.
>   *I'd like – a single room with bath, please. I'd like 80 francs)*
>
> 2. *Std B:* No, soixante. *(Discussion in English – indecipherable).*
>   *No sixty*
>
> 3. *Std A:* Je voudrais **une chambre - à une grande lit et - une bain** – s'il vous plaît. Je voudrais payer - **cinquante** francs.
>   *I'd like a room with a double bed and bath, please. I'd like to pay 50 francs.*
>
> 4. *Std B:* Vous avez réservé?
>   *Have you booked?*
>
> 5. *Std A:* Non, je n'ai pas réservé.
>   *No, I haven't booked.*
>
> 6. *Std B:* Je regretté um madame -er mais j'ai seuelment **une chambre avec deux lits - et avec un bain.** Elle coûte – um **quatre-vingts** francs.
>   *I'm sorry um madame- er but I've only got a room with two single beds – and with bath. It costs 80 francs.*
>
> 7. *Std A:* Bon, d'accord, je prends cette chambre.
>   *Good, I agree, I'll take the room.*
>
> <div align="right">(Eremophila Secondary)</div>

However, even in the completion of this type of task which requires little more than repetition of the model, opportunities arose for learners to provide meaningful feedback to each other, as seen in turn 2 in the above excerpt. Student A's initial turn contains a number of problems – the wrong indefinite article with 'lit' and 'bain', omission of 'payer' after 'voudrais' and the incorrect fee for the room. In turn 2, Student B responds to the last of these errors, correcting the amount to be paid for the room, a move that stimulates further comment in L1. As with excerpt 3, other errors made by Student A are ignored by Student B, perhaps to maintain the communicative flow. The impact of this interaction is seen in turn 3; Student A persists with the errors in the indefinite article, but uses 'payer' after 'voudrais', as required.

Another instance of interaction between this pair can be seen in excerpt 10. It involves the 'je voudrais payer' structure featured above:

Excerpt 10
1. *Std A:* Ok. Madame Lamer. Je suis Madame, Madame Lamer. *(Then reads/recites the next lines very dramatically).* Je voudrais une chambre avec, no, à une grand lit -avec une bain *(partner giggles because dramatic reading has fallen apart a bit)* s'il vous plaît. Je voudrais payer –er – soixante-quatre?
Ok. Madame Lamer. I am Madame, Madam Lamer. I'd like a room with, no, with a double bed, please. I'd like to pay sixty four?

2. *Std B:* Soixante quinze.
Seventy five.

3. *Std A:* Soixante quinze francs.
Seventy five francs.

(Eremophila Secondary)

In the last sentence of turn l, A seeks confirmation from B about whether she's indicated the right price for the room. Student B corrects her (recast) in turn 2 and A incorporates the correction by repeating it in turn 3. Of note about this whole exchange is the fact that Student A adds her own utterance to the script in the initial turn by declaring herself to be Madame Lamer, before continuing the model dialogue with attempted dramatic flourish. In fact, something about the process of performing this role play seems to have stimulated this student to start producing her own language because she does this again a little further on in the activity, as is shown in turn 3 of excerpt 11:

Excerpt 11
1. *Std A:* Bon, d'accord, je prends cette chambre. - Madame -
Good. Ok, I'll take this room. – Mrs –

2. *Std B:* Monsieur Lejardin.
Mr Lejardin.

3. *Std A:* Ah, c'est vous.
Ah, it's you.

(Eremophila Secondary)

Student A's own contribution to the dialogue in turn 3 comes in response to Student B's correction of the prospective client's title in turn 2.

A pair from another French secondary class worked on a similar activity. Their interaction included more instances of negotiated exchanges than the pair discussed above. This was especially the case in the early part of the role play and appeared to be mainly related to two factors. One was the difficulties experienced by one of the students, which her partner was able to respond to with helpful feedback. The other was the fact that their role play activity was less structured than the one discussed above, in that the pair had to produce their own version of a dialogue from a longer model, rather than just substitute items as indicated on the worksheet. Some examples of the interaction and feedback are illustrated in excerpts 12 -14:

> *Excerpt 12*
> 1. *Std S:* Qu'est-ce que vous désirez?
>   *What would you like?*
>
> 2. *Std C:* Je voudrais la menu à carte.
>   *I'd like the à la carte menu.*
>
> 3. *Std S:* But I'm asking you what you want.
>   *But I'm asking you what you want.*
>
> 4. *Std C:* Yeh. I want something from that side. *(à la carte rather than fixed price).* - Ok. Um – um – er – er poulet froid garni frites/salade or - brochette de porc garnié *(adds an accented e)* or
>   *Ok. Um – um – er – er cold chicken with salad and chips or – pork skewers with or*
>
> 5. *Std S:* Wait. You're talking about the hors-d'oeuvre. Ok.
>
> 6. *Std C:* Um. Collé (Coquille) St. Jacqui, Jacqui (Jacques), omelette au fromage *(asks something in English)*
>   *…cheese omelette…*
>
> 7. *Std S:* No, no, no no.
>
> 8. *Std C: (makes a comment in English which suggests she's a bit perplexed about how to proceed.)*
>
> 9. *Std S:* Ok, we'll start again. Qu'est-ce que vous désirez?
>   *What would you like?*
>
> > *(Sassafras Secondary)*

Excerpt 12 is the start of the role play. Student S seems to have more control over the activity than Student C, whose responses do not quite match the questions asked (turn 2),

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who goes to the wrong part of the menu (turn 4), cannot pronounce the required vocabulary (turn 6) or just does not seem quite sure how to respond (turn 8). Student S takes on the expert role in turn 3 and maintains it throughout the activity. She repeats 'Qu'est-ce que vous désirez?' in L1, in effect, inviting Student C to reformulate her utterance to make it a more appropriate response to the question. Student C begins her reformulation in turn 4, but selects items from the main course rather than hors-d'oeuvres. Student S stops her, signals in L1 that she's selected from the wrong part menu and, by implication, again indicates a need to reformulate (turn 5). Student C attempts to respond to this feedback (turn 6), but does not seem to do so appropriately, as Student S responds negatively in turn (7) and then decides to re-start the activity in turn 9.

Two aspects of Student S's feedback in this excerpt are of interest: the language of the feedback and its focus. It is likely that Student S uses L1 because her limited level of proficiency would make it difficult for her offer that feedback in L2. In addition, the focus of Student S's feedback is meaning rather than linguistic accuracy. Even though Student C makes grammatical and pronunciation errors in turns 2, 4 and 6, Student S ignores these errors and concentrates on getting C to respond in the most appropriate way to the questions put to her. There are two possible explanations for Student S ignoring the other errors: they are not crucial to unravelling the meaning of the exchange and/or Student S is unaware of them.

However, Student S's feedback does not always ignore errors, as excerpts 13 and 14 illustrate:

> *Excerpt 13*
> 1. *Std C:* Er – je vais prendre - je vais prendre - la – la omelette ou champignons.
>   *I'm going to have mushroom omelette.*
>
> 2. *Std S:* Is that omelette?
>
> 3. *Std C:* Yeh.
>
> 4. *Std S:* omelette – aux champignons
>   - *mushroom omelette*

5. *Std C: Oui.*
   Yes.

                                                    (Sassafras Secondary)

The focus of the feedback in excerpt 13 is linguistic accuracy, where meaning is contingent on it. In turn 1, Student C, who says she wants to order mushroom omelette, introduces an element of confusion into her statement by using 'ou' rather than 'aux' before 'champignons'. Student S checks in L1 to confirm her interpretation of what she had heard (turn 2) then recasts 'ou champignons' to 'aux champignons' (turn 4). The more technical error of failing to omit the vowel in the definite article 'la' before 'omelette', which does not affect the meaning of the exchange, is ignored by Student C.

Excerpt 14 features another recast by Student S (turn 3), this time to provide the correct pronunciations for *vin*:

> *Excerpt 14*
> 1. *Std S:* um Bon, alors, les escargots à l'aïl, une omelette au fromage - au tarte aux fraises. C'est bien ça?
>   *Good, then, garlic snails, a cheese omelette, strawberry tart. Is that all?*
>
> 2. *Std C:* Ça...et je peux voir la carte des vins. *(mispronounced)*
>   *This…and I'd like the wine list.*
>
> 3. *Std S:* Vin *(repeats the word, using the correct pronunciation).*
>   *Wine.*
>
> 4. *Std C:* Vin – des vins
>
> 5. *Std S:* Bien sûr, là violà.
>   *Certainly, here it is.*

                                                    (Sassafras Secondary)

The recast in turn 3 may have been stimulated by the fact that the teacher had recast a similar mispronunciation of the word by another student earlier in the lesson, a possible indication that students make use of corrective feedback not addressed directly to them, as claimed by Ohta (2001). Student C repeats the recast (turn 4), interestingly in the singular and student S then concludes the exchange.

Excerpts 1-14 featured interaction from functional language practice activities. Because of the nature of the activities, much of the interaction involved repetition and reproduction

of prefabricated chunks of language. Nevertheless, in completing these activities, students also used a range of other interactional moves and provided feedback to each other in the form of recasts, confirmation checks, clarification requests, requests for reformulation and overt correction. Except for recasts, this feedback was often provided in L1, perhaps because of learners' limited proficiency. Feedback which targeted linguistic accuracy was less likely to occur, unless this accuracy was crucial to the meaning of an exchange. Instances of negotiated interaction were found in the functional language practice activities such as the role play from which excerpts 9 - 14 were taken. Feedback was often given by just one of the partners who was either more confident and/or more able than the other and took on the expert role.

7.4.2 Focused communicative tasks

The focused communicative tasks that are discussed in this section are information gap tasks. They were used in only three of the ten classes, all of which were classes of French and in one lesson in each of the classes. The data discussed here comes from two of the classes (one primary and one secondary). In the third class (secondary French) the students were given the information gap task to do towards the end of the lesson. Despite detailed instructions from the teacher, they found the task quite complicated and spent most of the time trying to work it out and used mainly L1 to do this.

The data from the one-way information gap task came from rather extended exchange (about fifteen minutes) between students from Hibbertia Primary. This task required each student to find out from their partner the colour of particular items of furniture in a house they had designed. The resulting interaction was very similar to that which occurred between learners completing the functional language practice activities in the first several excerpts discussed above. Excerpt 15 illustrates this. It is taken from the beginning of the task, but is characteristic of the task as a whole.

> *Excerpt 15*
> 1. *Std M:* Le lit – est - rouge?
>   *The bed – is – red?*
>
> 2. *Std A:* No. La - four [pronounced 'foir'] - er, er, jaune?
>   *No. The – oven – er, er yellow?*

3. *Std M:* What thing?

4. *Std A:* The oven. *(A explains in English)*

5. *Std M:* - Non.
   No.

6. Std A: La Frigidaire – est - jaune? *(laughter)*
   The fridge – is - yellow?

7. *Std M:* Non. la – commode - est - mauve?
   No. The chest – is - purple?

8. *Std A:* Errm - la commode – jaune?
   Errm - the chest – yellow?

9. *Std M:* No. – Le divan *(mispronounced divin)* –
   No. - the lounge –

10. *Std A:* est - *(prompting)*
    is –

11. *Std M:* - est - noir?
    is – black?

12. *Std A:* Non. Err. La Frigidaire – *marron?*
    No. Err. The fridge – brown?
                      (Hibbertia Primary)

As one would expect, given the simplicity of the task, most of the turns in this excerpt follow a question and answer routine. There is, however, a departure from this predictable pattern in turns 3, 4 and 10, when the students deal with a communication breakdown. In turn 3, Student M asks for clarification in L1 about 'foir' (Student A's mispronunciation of 'four' or *oven*). Student A responds in turn 4 with a translation and further explanation in English. In turn 10, Student A responds to Student M's pause after 'divan' in the previous turn by supplying the verb, which Student M repeats to complete the question in turn 11. Student A's prompt in turn 10 is interesting because in this excerpt, and elsewhere in the task, she often omits the copula when she asks her question (until the teacher overhears her and gives explicit correction on this point). Student M generally uses the copula, so perhaps it is this that enables Student A to recognise that it is needed here for M's question.

The interactional moves discussed above were among the few that occurred during this task and significantly tended to be in L1. Interaction related to management of the task was also in L1. As indicated above, the simplicity of the task contributed to the fact that most of the interaction involved simple repetition of known language. The students' very limited linguistic repertoire made it difficult for them to do much else. This is demonstrated again in excerpt 16. After three attempts to guess the colour of the fridge (turns 1, 3 and 5), Student A becomes frustrated at her lack of success (turn 7). Apparently not able to ask the question another way, she turns her attention to asking about the colour of the chest of drawers. Fortunately, she guesses correctly in this instance.

> *Excerpt 16*
> 1. *Std A:* …La Frigidaire est rose?
>   *The fridge is pink?*
>
> 2. *Std B:* Non. La table est – jaune?
>   *No. The table is – yellow?*
>
> 3. *Std A:* Non. La Frigidaire est noir?
>   *No. The fridge is black?*
>
> 4. *Std B:* Non. – La table est – verte?
>   *No. The table is – green?*
>
> 5. *Std A:* Non. La Frigidaire est mauve?
>   *No. The fridge is purple?*
>
> 6. *Std B:* Non. La table est noire *(mispronounced 'no')*
>   *No. The table is black?*
>
> 7. *Std A:* Non. I give up on that fridge.   La commode – est marron?
>   *No….The chest is purple?*
>
> 8. *Std B:* Oui. La table - est bleue?
>   *Yes. The table – is blue?*
>
>   *(Hibbertia Primary)*

The two-way information gap task carried out in the secondary class was more like a real life exchange and slightly more complex than the one-way task discussed above. It involved a young traveller booking herself into a youth hostel and trying to find out about

the facilities from the manager. A worksheet provided each student with essential L2 vocabulary and structures to support their interaction in the role of either student or manager. Students were expected to carry out the task with a number of different partners. The data from which the excerpts below are drawn came from thirteen different pairs of students. Twelve of the exchanges were relatively brief, being composed of between four and fifteen turns.

As indicated above, information gap tasks (and especially two-way information gap tasks) have inherent design features that encourage learners to negotiate for meaning. In reality, however, whether or not learners were able to exploit this possibility seemed to depend on whether individuals encountered communication or other difficulties and how well the individuals in the pair could collaborate.

Some pairs seemed to have control of both the task and the language required for the task and produced exchanges where there was nothing to query or seek support for, as can be seen in excerpt 18:

> *Excerpt 18*
> 1. *Std K:* Est-ce qu'il y a – um – um -est-ce qu'il y a une salle de jeux?
>   *Is there a games room?*
>
> 2. *Std J:* Um, oui, au premier étage
>   *Um, yes, on the first floor.*
>
> 3. *Std K:* Um, c'est ouvert quand?
>   *Um, when is it open?*
>
> 4. *Std J:* C'est ouvert à sept heures à vingt, à vingt et un heures.
>   *It's open at (from)* 7.00am to 8.00, to 9.00pm.
>   *(Eremophila Secondary)*

Either the task was very straightforward for this pair and/or they followed very closely the text provided in the support material to avoid getting into difficulties.

More characteristic was the interaction in excerpts 19 and 20, where students encounter difficulties and try to negotiate, but in doing so revert to L1 to keep the exchange going. In excerpt 19, Student A's initial uncertainty with 'on peut' (turn 3) calls forth a

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clarification request in L1 from Student B (turn 4). In response, Student A seems to ask for confirmation that she has the verb right (turn 5). This appears to disorient Student B, who questions how her partner is tackling the task.   The focus of the remainder of the exchange (turns 7 -10) then becomes the task itself and what is needed to complete it.

> *Excerpt 19*
> 1. *Std A: - (Possibly reading from worksheet.)* Est-ce que il y a une - cuisine?
>   *Is there a kitchen?*
>
> 2. *Std B:* Umm - la cuisine - est –chez le - premier étage.
>   *Umm – the kitchen – is – at the first floor.*
>
> 3. *Std A:*   Umm, umm - une peut – on peut -?
>   *Umm, umm – can one -?*
>
> 4. *Std B:* What did you say?
>
> 5. *Std A:* on peut?
>   *can one?*
>
> 6. *Std B:* I don't know what you're actually doing.
>
> 7. *Std A:* I don't know. Umm *(Laughs)* - Is this all right?
>
> 8. *Std B:* You have to say, what time is it open till.
>
> 9. *Std A:* Yeh, I say, au premier étage.
>   *...on the first floor*
>
> 10. *Std B:* Oui. *(indecipherable),* s'il vous plaît? –
>   *Yes. ...please?*
>
> > *(Eremophila Secondary)*

In excerpt 20, Student O makes a clarification request (turn 2) in order to understand a key item of vocabulary. Student R translates the word, thus enabling Student Q to attempt a response in L2 (turn 4). Turns 5 and 6 involve what seem to be more like parallel utterances and 7 and 8 close the exchange.

> *Excerpt 20*
> 1. *Std R:* Um, I'll ask you another one anyway. Um, on peut - on peut acheter des provisions ici?
>   *Um, can one – can one shop here?*

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2. *Std Q:* Provisions?

3. *Std R:* That's shopping. –

4. *Std Q:* Les provisions est rez de saussée - rez de chaussée
   Shopping is the ground floor – ground floor

5. *Std R:* What was reception on? - *(indecipherable)*

6. *Std Q:* Elle est entrée à huit heures et *(indecipherable because of talk from others)* - [vingt–deux heures].
   It's entered [open] between 8.00am and…10.00pm.

7. *Std R:* Merci beaucoup. Au revoir.
   Thank you. Goodbye.

8. *Std Q:* Au revoir.
   Goodbye.

<div align="right">

(Eremophila Secondary)

</div>

Some pairs of students seemed to devote most of their interaction to working out the task, checking on associated vocabulary. In doing this they operated almost entirely in L1, as is illustrated in excerpt 21:

Excerpt 21
1. *Std G:* Have you done this one?

2. *Std H:* That's the bar and I think that's the shop.

3. *Std G:* That's the bar.

4. *Std H:* That's the bar, that's the shop, that's reception-

5. *Std G:* What's that?

6. *Std H:* That's reception-

7. *Std G:* And the bar…

8. *Std H:* I don't know when it's open

9. *Std G:* It says bar and téléphone, et salle de jeux et cuisine et magasin.
   … telephone, games room and kitchen and shop.

10. *Std H:* salle de jeux that's *(indecipherable)*
    games room…

11. *Std G:* No that's *(indecipherable)*.
(Eremophila Secondary)

These excerpts demonstrate that, in many respects, the patterns of interaction and feedback in the focused communicative tasks discussed above did not differ very markedly from those in the functional language practice activities. Both types of tasks produced interaction that involved the reproduction of models provided to support the learners, although this was predictably a more likely outcome with the functional language practice. Both resulted in instances of learners making use of elicitation moves, of providing negative feedback in the form of clarification requests or confirmation checks, recasts, explicit correction and of utilising positive evidence such as translating vocabulary to L1.

How effectively learners are able to meet each others' input and feedback needs is a question that continues to exercise researchers' attention. Various studies point to the benefits of interaction between learners of different levels of proficiency and between NNS and NS. As early as 1988 Young found that NNS pairs who were closest in levels of proficiency negotiated less than those with different levels of proficiency. Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Pannios and Linnell (1996) showed that NS interactants meet the input and feedback needs of NNS interactants better than NNSs. On the other hand, studies by Donato (1994) and Brooks and Swain (2001) suggest that in peer interaction learners can take on the role of expert and learner at the same time and Adams (2004) demonstrates that peer interaction contributes to learning. The excerpts examined above reveal both the strengths and limitations of the peer interaction that occurred in the classes that were part of this research, in terms of the input and feedback they were able to give each other. One of the strengths appeared to be the capacity of some learners to take on the expert role. In both the functional language practice activities and the focused communication tasks, interaction that was in some small way 'negotiated' rather than just a result of drills, tended to occur when one of the partners was slightly stronger in handling that task and its associated language and was thus able to take an expert role and provide the feedback needed to continue the exchange. This lends credence both to the claims made by Donato

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(1994) and Brooks and Swain (2001). The limitations derive from the learners' low level of proficiency, their very incomplete knowledge of the linguistic system and their capacity to stray from the task. These are consistent with the findings of Young (1988) and Pica et al. (1996) and suggest that putting all responsibility for a learning task on the learner may be a less than an ideal approach (Williams, 1999, p.589).

In the focused communication tasks, especially the two-way information gap tasks, the interactional moves attempted by learners seemed to be less dependent on differences (even if slight) in levels of proficiency as on the level of challenge provided by the tasks. In other words, if the task presented no communication or other difficulties to the learners, they simply reproduced the language provided in the worksheets. If, on the other hand, they encountered difficulties, learners often tried to respond by drawing on their own linguistic, pragmatic and strategic resources. Working out the requirements of a task was a common non-linguistic difficulty encountered by learners. The claim made on learners' attentional space by operational aspects of activities such as two-way information gap tasks is briefly discussed in Chapter 9, which examines students' perceptions of interaction.

In both FLP1-3 and CT1 examined above, learners resorted to L1 to give each certain types of feedback. This occurred because they responded instinctively in L1 or perceived they did not have the linguistic resources to interact in L2. The use of L1 by learners has been explored in the context of immersion programs. Swain and Lapkin (2000) found that its use in the performance of learning tasks facilitated learning. However, Blanco-Iglesias, Broner and Tarone (1995) found that use of L1 by students tends to increase rather than decrease with exposure to L2 in immersion classes. Tarone and Swain (1995) suggested that its use in interpersonal interaction occurs possibly because learners do not have the required informal registers in L2 for this type of interaction.

The role of L1 in promoting L2 learning among students with very limited levels of proficiency, such as those involved in this study, needs further investigation. The data discussed above show how L1 was used by learners to supplement their limited L2

resources and support each other in the completion of tasks. Clearly, using L1 was helpful to the learners and may have contributed to their learning. However, as Wells (1999) indicated, balance between L1 and L2 use is crucial. The next part of this chapter, which examines interaction in tasks carried out predominantly in L1, further explores this issue.

7.5 Learner-learner interaction mainly in L1

When learners work together to produce a text, they engage in interaction which concentrates on problem solving and knowledge building. This interaction has been termed 'collaborative dialogue' (Swain, 2000). According to Swain (2000), the main purpose of this interaction is discussion about and reflection on the elements of language needed for the text that is being constructed, rather than the completion of an interpersonal transaction (asking or answering a question to obtain information or goods or to convey a state of mind). Thus learners explore possibilities, suggest alternatives, try them out and explain and/or justify particular choices. They also interact to manage and expedite the task being completed and for interpersonal reasons.

In this study, the focused focused communicative tasks (CT) 2 that generated collaborative dialogue included preparing for a debate, preparing questions to ask exchange students who were to visit the class, describing combinations of food that would be considered disgusting and composing a segment of a recipe as part of a jigsaw activity. The collaborative dialogue, which usually occurred mainly in L1, was analysed for the kinds of LREs and the types of interaction involved. The findings on LREs and types of interaction are now presented, followed by an examination of the types of interaction associated with particular LREs.

7.5.1 Language-related Episodes

Analysis of the LREs produced by learners showed that slightly more than half focused on lexis, slightly less than half concentrated on form and that none focused on discourse. Lexis-related LREs were mainly about finding the appropriate L2 equivalent of nouns and verbs that learners wanted to use. Form-related LREs were often concerned with spelling (type and place of accents for learners of French, double or single consonants and accents

for learners of Italian); verb form; sentence structure; use of articles (alone and with prepositions); and, gender (whether masculine or feminine and issues of agreement between language elements). LREs concerned with spelling were two to three times more frequent than the others, probably because some of the tasks had a written component and teachers expect accuracy in the written language.

7.5.2 Types of interaction

Four of the five types of interaction that were the focus of analysis featured notably in the data:

- learner requests to each other about language;
- learner-learner metatalk;
- learner-initiated requests to the teacher about language; and,
- other-correction.

Language-related Episodes were most often manifest in 'learner requests to each other about language' and in 'learner-learner metatalk', which occurred almost three times more often than 'learner initiated requests to the teacher about language' and 'other correction'. The fact that learners performing these tasks were operating predominantly in L1 may have facilitated the first two types of interaction. This may also have limited the need for learners in the current study to direct requests to the teacher, which were the most prevalent type of interaction in the study conducted by Williams (1999). The relatively large size of the classes (20 - 25) often made getting immediate access to the teacher difficult and would also have encouraged learners to draw on each other for help. Interactional moves and routines in L2 occurred occasionally and students used both implicit (recasts) and explicit means of correcting each other in almost equal measure.

7.5.3 Language-related Episodes and types of interaction

Examples of LREs associated with the types of interaction described, their focus and apparent function are now presented and discussed. The LREs concerned with lexis are considered first, followed by those concerned with form.

Language-related Episodes that focused on lexis usually involved learner requests to a partner or another person in the group. They were typically introduced by 'What's X?' or 'How do you say, Y?' Excerpt 22, in which pair of students work together to prepare for a debate, is a typical example of this type of LRE:

> *Excerpt 22*
> 1. *Std A:* What's a play? *(Student C is consulting the dictionary.)*
>
> 2. *Std C:* Le drame.
>
> 3. *Std A:* A play.
> <div align="center">(Eremophila Secondary)</div>

Learner-learner metatalk was also often featured in LREs concerned with lexis. This is illustrated in the first turn in excerpt 23, which comes from a group of students brainstorming as part of a jigsaw activity:

> *Excerpt 23*
> 1. *Std 5:* Pane, that's bread.
>
> 2. *Std 4:* Is it?
>
> 3. *Stds:* Yeh.
> <div align="center">(Acanthus Secondary)</div>

In excerpts 22 and 23, the final turn has a confirmatory function. In excerpt 22, this is provided by the Student A, who posed the question in the first place; in excerpt 23 it was provided by other students in the group.

Language-related Episodes that focused on lexis also featured other-correction in the form of recasts. This is illustrated in the last two turns of the next excerpt, taken from a group task where students were preparing for a debate about the relative merits of country and city living:

> *Excerpt 24*
> 1. *Std D:* How do you say 'to make jam'?
>
> 2. *Std A:* On peut faire –
>
> 3. *Std D:* Confiture.
>
> 4. *Std A:* – make la confiture   You can –

5. *Std E:* On peut faire de la confiture.
   One can make jam.

The initial LRE (turns 1-3) involves the typical, *How do you say ~?* Drawing on L1 and L2, the learners alternatively contribute linguistic elements to solve the problem posed by Student D's question in turn 1. Student A answers the 'to make' part of the initial question (turn 2), to which Student D adds *jam*, without the article (turn 3). This is provided by Student A in turn 4, who engages in 'other-correction' by recasting 'confiture' as 'la confiture'. Finally, in the last turn, Student E brings together each of the elements and produces the whole sentence correctly by recasting 'la confiture' to 'de la confiture'.

Excerpt 25, like excerpt 24, features a number of different types of LREs related to the same interaction, a characteristic that Williams (1999) also found in her study. Excerpt 25 includes interactional moves such as elicitation (turn 2) and a clarification check (turn 4), as well as types of interaction illustrated in excerpts 22-24:

Excerpt 25
1. *Std E:* Les enfants – ont -
   Children – have –

2. *Std A:* Have a big - a lot of space. That's beaucoup d' –

3. *Std E:* What's 'play space'?

4. *Std A:* What?

5. *Std E:* How do you say 'play space'?

6. *Std A: (Asks another student.)* How do you say 'play space'?

7. *Other Std:* espace

8. *Std A:* espace –

9. *Std E:* pour jouer

10. *Std A:* Space for play.

The main LRE comes from Student E's need to find the French equivalent for 'play space' and involves several requests between the partners, and one to learners outside the dyad. Student E asks Student A for help (turns 3 and 5). She doesn't know the word but asks another student, who supplies, 'espace' (turn 7), which Student A repeats for the benefit of E, strategically pausing to encourage her response. Student E responds by adding, 'pour jouer' (by implication 'espace pour jouer'). Student A confirms the input by translating, 'space for play'. Here, as in turn 2, Student A engages in metatalk that seems to be self-directed, as much as directed to her partner.

The collaborative nature of the interaction between Students E and A and the way in which they each contribute to solving a linguistic problem is evident throughout the exchange, but is particularly marked in the first two and last three turns. In the first turn, Student E begins the sentence. In turn 2, Student A takes advantage of the pause after 'ont' to provide the next part of the sentence – *a lot of space*. She does this initially in L1 and then reminds herself (and her partner, presumably) of the L2 equivalent.

Language-related Episodes that focused on form, and concentrated specifically on spelling occurred at least twice as often as other topics. Excerpts 26 and 27 illustrate this type of LRE. Excerpt 26 is from a task where students were preparing for a debate. The group had decided that one of the advantages offered by country living was that they could hold a nativity play at Christmas with a cast of real animals. The focus of the LRE is the spelling of 'mystère de la nativité' in turn 3, where Student B engages in metatalk about the particular type of accent needed for 'nativité' that seems to be self-directed as much as addressed to the other learner:

> *Excerpt 26*
> 1. *Std B:* A nativity play! *(Reads from dictionary.)* Mystery (mystère) de la navitie (nativité). Alright (*begins to spell*) It's my -
>
> 2. *Std A:* Hold on -
>
> 3. *Std B:* It's nativity play. Mystery (mystère) de la nativité. *(Spells)* My – st-è with a grave – re, de la - nati – vi – t – é with an acute. That's a nativity play.
>
> <div align="right">*(Eremophila Secondary)*</div>

In excerpt 27, the students are brainstorming about the ingredients for a recipe. In the first turn, Student R asks her partner how to spell 'uova' (egg)[5]:

> *Excerpt 27*
> 1. *Std R:* Ok. And then the last one, pacchetto d'uova. I don't know, how do you spell uova? Ova?
> *…eggs?...?.*
>
> 2. *Std M:* Ouva.
>
> 3. *Std R:* Ova. *(Continued discussion about spelling.)*
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

In this instance, the discussion does not lead to a correct solution of the problem. In turn 1 Student R pronounces the word correctly when he asks his partner how to spell it, but immediately offers an alternative without the initial 'u'. Student M's response in turn 2 (which could be an attempted recast or just repetition) introduces another error and Student R goes back to 'ova' in turn 3. The pair remains uncertain about the correct spelling and continues to discuss the matter.

The interaction generated by students collaborating to construct text was often extended (five minutes or more in duration) and, as noted above, sometimes resulted in a succession of LREs that were part of the same interaction. Williams (1999) reported that a small percentage (8%) of her corpus contained a succession of LREs and noted that they "tended to occur at the higher levels of proficiency and always consisted of metatalk following either a correction or request for assistance" (Williams, 1999, p. 600).

Interestingly, the low level proficiency learners in this study also sometimes produced a succession of LREs. Excerpt 28 provides an example of such an exchange and includes a succession of LREs concerned mainly with form:

> *Excerpt 28*
> 1. *Std I:* Why is it, why is it 'il or la'? I don't understand it.
>
> 2. *Std K:* Because if it ends in 'a' it's 'la' and 'o' its 'il'.

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[5] This word is difficult to pronounce, and therefore may be difficult to write, for speakers of English, because of the two initial vowels and its similarity to 'uva' (grapes).

3. *Std I:* Oh, I get it. - Grattugi<u>a</u>no – gratt<u>u</u>giano il cioccolato. *(gets the stress right the second time)* – No, how do you say 'smash' le uove?[6]

4. *Std K:* Break

5. *Std I:* Break, break - *(trying to find the word in dictionary.)*

6. *Std K:* We'll have no break. Mix the cream and eggs.

7. *Std I:* Mescoli
   You mix

8. *Std K:* No

9. *Std I:* Mescol<u>a</u>no. *(stress in wrong place)*
   They mix.

10. *Std K:* Mescol<u>a</u>no.

11. *Std I:* Mescol<u>a</u>no - il crema -.
    They mix the cream.

12. *Std K:* La -

13. *Std I:* Crema is – o - if I have 'o' it's il crema –

14. *Std K:* No

15. *Std I:* e le uova - e la – uova -

16. *Std K:* It's le. Ask her.

<div align="center">(Acanthus Secondary)</div>

The succession of LREs appear to be triggered by Student I requesting help from his partner about when to use a masculine or feminine article. This request results in metatalk around that problem, firstly by Student K, who provides an explanation (turn 2) and by Student I, who in turns 13 and 15, tries to apply the rule given by his partner earlier. The excerpt also features both explicit and implicit other-correction (turns 4 and 12 respectively) and interactional moves and routines in the form of negative feedback (turn 8) and non-corrective repetition (turn 10).

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[6] The syllable stressed by the student when pronouncing particular words, here and elsewhere in this exchange, is underlined.

As noted above, excerpt 28 features a number of LREs concerned with form, most of which are correctly resolved by the feedback provided by one of the partners. The first LRE, turns 1 – 3, focuses on gender. Student I wants to understand when to use a masculine or feminine article and directs his request to his partner. Student K engages in metatalk to provide an explanation which clarifies the matter for his partner, who correctly produces the sentence, *They grate the chocolate*, self-correcting his initial mispronunciation of 'grattugiano' and using the right article with 'cioccolato'.

The second LRE is concerned with vocabulary (turns 3 - 6) with Student I asking how to say 'smash' the eggs. Student K suggests 'break instead'. However, neither knows the Italian equivalent for 'break' and Student I cannot find it in the dictionary. Student K decides to move on to the next step of mixing the eggs and cream. This produces the next LRE (turns 7 - 10) which concerns the form of the verb 'mescolare' required by the teacher, who had instructed students to use the third person singular or plural forms.

The fourth (turns 11-14) and fifth (turns 15 - 16) LREs return to the issue addressed in the first LRE, namely gender. Here Student I queries Student K's correction of his use of the masculine article with 'crema' and erroneously insists on his original 'il crema', but Student K stands his ground (turn 14). The final LRE arises when Student I logically generalises the rule that 'a' ending nouns take 'la' and decides that 'le uova' should be 'la uova'. Student K again corrects him, insisting accurately that it is 'le' (as 'l'uovo' changes gender and forms the irregular plural 'le uova') and directs him to the other expert, the teacher, for confirmation. The learner-initiated request to the teacher about language happens several turns later.

Turns 11 - 16 of this excerpt are notable for the use of recasts as a form of other correction. Of particular interest is the expert role taken by Student K. He provides both explicit and implicit negative feedback throughout the exchange, from which Student I seems to benefit.

The final excerpt also centres around two LREs concerned with form, both of which involve students directing requests about language to each other. Rather than engaging in

metatalk, the students initially explore possible alternatives in L2, and thus arrive at an acceptable solution:

> *Excerpt 30*
> 1. *Std L:* Ti piace – ti piace –
>   *Do you like – do you like*
>
> 2. *Std M:* l'Australia.
>
> 3. *Std L:* Ti piace l'Australia?
>
> 4. *Std O:* Uuum.
>
> 5. *Std L: (Repeats the sentence as she writes it down.)* Ti piace l'Australia?   Is it 'dell' Australia'?
>   *Do you like Australia? ...of Australia?*
>
> 6. *Std M:* Uum, probably.
>
> 7. *Std L:* No, I don't know.
>
> 8. *Std O:* Could you write, 'Che cosa ti piace fare l'Australia?'
>   *...What do you like to do Australia?*
>
> 9. *Std L:* First, 'Cosa ti piace dell'Australia?' What else? – Uum
>   *...What do you like about Australia? ...*
>
> <div align="right">*(Danthonia Secondary)*</div>

The first LRE is about the combination of preposition and article (di + il = dell') for 'about Australia' (turns 5 - 7). The second considers the issue of sentence structure (turns 8 - 9). It appears that the three students who are compiling questions to ask visiting exchange students from the TL country want to ask, 'What do you like about Australia?' Students L and M together generate, 'Ti piace l'Australia?' ('Do you like Australia?') in turns 1 – 3 by engaging in interactional moves and routines such as elicitation (turn 1) and positive evidence (turn 3). Student O has doubts about this sentence (turn 4) and Student L, who is the scribe asks her partner whether it should be 'dell'Australia'(turn 5). This is only tentatively accepted by Student M (turn 6). Student O then offers the circuit breaker, 'Che cosa ti piace fare l'Australia?' ('What do you like to do [in] Australia?') in turn 8, which although not correct, seems to stimulate Student L to produce a grammatically acceptable version of the desired sentence, 'Cosa ti piace dell'Australia?' Whether this is precisely what Student L was trying to express in turn 5 is impossible to establish.

Nevertheless, the process draws the students' attention to issues of form in a meaningful way, provides them with comprehensible input and enables them to produce the needed question.

The data discussed above show that the school-aged LOTE learners interacting mainly in L1 used similar types of interaction as the adult ESL learners studied by Williams (1999). Among the learners studied by Williams, 'learner-initiated requests to the teacher about language' were the most prevalent type of interaction. In contrast, learners in the current study most often made requests to each other about language and engaged in 'learner-learner metatalk'. Interestingly, Williams (1999) found that 'learner-initiated requests to the teacher about language' decreased with proficiency. The relative paucity of this type of interaction among the learners in the current study may therefore be because they were operating mainly in L1. However, the opportunity for students in the current study to ask for help from the teacher also appeared to be contingent on teachers' interactional style. Some teachers appeared to be more inclined to dominate the interaction process when near pairs or a group by commenting or initiating questions, thus limiting students' opportunity to direct queries to them. Teacher proximity and, therefore, availability to students could also influence the extent to which students resorted to this strategy.

The absence of LREs concerned with discourse in the data and the predominant focus on lexis would seem to be consistent with the learners' limited proficiency and the relative simplicity of tasks in which they were engaged. A relevant aspect of Williams' (1999) findings is that the LREs of learners with lower levels of proficiency focused very strongly on lexis and, as proficiency increased, LREs became more form-oriented.

Excerpts 22-30 demonstrate how students used L1 to focus on and solve linguistic problems that they could not tackle, or perceived they could not tackle, in L2, in order to collaboratively generate L2 texts. Sometimes this was done in a highly collaborative way, with all parties contributing equally to the text produced. At other times, however, individuals took on and maintained either the role of expert or learner. The LREs produced by learners show how they used L1 to support, scaffold and sometimes extend

each others' L2 use. Although occurring predominantly in L1, the LREs also involved interplay between the two languages. Learners' movement between L1 and L2 enabled them to highlight and explore linguistic issues in ways that helped them to complete tasks and, in some instances, seemed to contribute to their L2 learning.

7.6 Summary and discussion

This chapter addressed research questions two and three[7] from the perspective of learner-learner interaction. The types of learner-learner interaction revealed by this study were closely linked to learners' language choices and the nature of activity or task involved. Interaction that occurred as part of functional language practice and some types of focused communicative tasks (e.g., one or two-way information gap tasks) were conducted mainly in L2. Focused communicative tasks where students collaborated to construct an L2 text occurred mainly in L1.

When involved in functional language practice, learners engaged mostly in interactional routines such as pattern practice and elicitation. This was partly because of the nature of the activities carried out. However, learners also occasionally used negative feedback such as recasts, clarification requests and confirmation checks (sometimes in L1), overt correction and positive evidence in the form of translation and completion.

Recasts, clarification requests and confirmation checks, overt correction and positive evidence consisting of completion and translations were most apparent in the interaction that occurred as part of focused communicative tasks, especially the two-way information gap tasks. The interaction seen in the data from the one-way task involved a strong element of pattern practice and therefore bore considerable resemblance to what occurred in the functional language practice.

A difference between functional language practice and focused communicative tasks such as two-way information gap tasks was the more frequent use of L1 in the latter. Students

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[7] Research question two: 'How do particular patterns of interaction influence learners' language production?'   Research question three: 'Which contexts and tasks facilitate learner engagement in L2 interaction?'

tended to use L1 when they engaged in negotiation moves and also for task management and interpersonal exchanges, behaviour which is similar to that observed in students from immersion classes (Blanco-Iglesias, Broner & Tarone 1995; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Tarone & Swain, 1995). This may reflect the more 'conversational' nature of the two-way tasks, but is also likely to be linked to students' limited proficiency.

Learner-learner interaction in focused communicative tasks where students collaborated to construct an L2 text occurred mainly in L1. It featured interaction in which learners made requests to each other about the L2 they wanted to use, engaged in metatalk, initiated requests to the teacher about L2 and corrected each other. Analysis of learners' LREs in this interaction revealed that they focused in almost equal measure on L2 lexis and form and were most likely to involve interaction where learners made requests to each other about language and engaged in metatalk.

The influence of these types of interaction on students' language production was intriguing. Functional language practice and focused communicative tasks promoted participation involving use of L2. However, the functional language practice activities and the one-way information gap tasks provided few opportunities for students to give each other the kind of feedback that might stimulate negotiated interaction and result in modified output. These opportunities were slightly greater with the two-way information gap tasks; however, the provision of models to support students tended to remove the communicative need to make conversational adjustments. Limited learner proficiency also meant that where conversational adjustments occurred, they were often in L1.

Focused communicative tasks involving joint construction of texts did not appear to promote L2 production in an obvious way. However, it would seem that the LREs in L1 had the potential to contribute to the development of the learner's language by facilitating awareness of the particular linguistic features concerned.

An interesting feature of the L-L interaction as compared to T-C interaction was the relative absence of non-corrective repetition and expressions of reinforcement, despite the

more competent and/or confident learner often taking on the expert or teacher role and helping his/her partner overcome communication difficulties. This suggests that these interactional routines are linked to the teacher role of managing and encouraging learning.

The picture of L-L interaction that has emerged from this study highlights the influence of the types of activities and tasks used, and of learner proficiency, on interaction. It also draws attention to the interplay of these two factors. The analysis of different types of tasks by Pica, Kanagy and Falodun (1993) identified two-way information gap tasks as having the design characteristics that promote negotiated interaction to a greater extent than other types of tasks. The more *conversational* nature of the interaction that occurred when learners performed these tasks and the types of feedback they used bear out the argument made by Pica et al. (1993). However, the tendency of learners to have recourse to L1, especially for negotiation moves such as clarification requests and confirmation checks, highlights the proficiency issue.

The extent to which L1 is used and its role in foreign language classroom learning remains a topic of debate for researchers and teachers. Recently, Carr (2005, p.34), writing about the potential of tasked-based learning to meet the diverse needs of learners in today's LOTE classes, observed that "A surprising amount of classroom interaction continues to happen in English…" Carr suggested a task-based approach as a way of addressing this issue. Ohta (2001) argued that task type might not be the crucial factor in determining the quality of L-L interaction, but relevance of a particular activity or task to the learner's particular linguistic and other needs at the point of performing the task. Ohta's research also suggests that tasks *per se* do not necessarily result in greater L2 use and that the L1/L2 relationships in learner-learner interaction as in teacher-class/student interaction may be a more complex issue than previously thought. This study, like that of Antón and DiCamilla (1998) suggests that L1 has a role to play in the second language learning process by helping learners scaffold and support each others' language use and as a tool to think about their language learning. As such, it highlights the limitations of the cognitive-interactionist theoretical perspective in not addressing the role of L1 and L2 development. The real challenge may be for research to discover more precisely how L1 contributes to

L2 learning in the longer term in LOTE classroom learning and how to facilitate the transition from L1 to L2 in classroom interaction as part of developing proficiency. Once these issues are better understood, the implications for classroom pedagogy can be more realistically worked out.

CHAPTER 8

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF INTERACTION

8.1 Introduction

One of the questions this research study seeks to answer is about teachers' and learners' perceptions of interaction in the language class and its role in language learning. Investigation of teacher cognition is a well established area of research and more recently a number of studies have examined the beliefs of teachers working in the area of second language learning (Breen, 1991; Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver and Thwaite, 1998; Woods, 1996). Hall and Walsh (2002), in reviewing literature on recent developments in teacher-student interaction and language learning, point to connections between patterns of interaction adopted by teachers and their underlying belief system. Kim and Elder (2005) suggest that teacher beliefs may influence the extent to which L2 is used in the classroom. This chapter presents and discusses teachers' perceptions of the interaction occurring in their classes as revealed by the interviews conducted with them. It then examines their discourse about interaction more closely and explores the connections between this and the underlying conceptions of language learning suggested by this discourse.

Teachers' perception of interaction are presented and discussed under the following headings:

- the nature and patterns of interaction; and,
- activities that promote L2 interaction.

The final section of this chapter examines teachers' discourse about interaction and the concepts of language learning this discourse seems to suggest.

8.2 The nature and patterns of interaction

8.2.1 Participation structures

When asked to describe what they viewed as 'interaction' in their class, all of the teachers, explicitly or implicitly, referred to the participation structures through which interaction occurred. They identified interaction that was teacher-directed, i.e., the interaction that took place between the teacher and the class and/or small groups in the class and/or

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individuals. They also talked about the interaction that occurred between students themselves during pair or group work. The description given by the teacher from Danthonia Secondary exemplifies teacher responses:

> Interaction can be in various forms. It can be the teacher and the student, the student to the teacher. And that can be either the teacher teaching at the front of the class or the teacher going up to the individual or a couple of people that are seeking help or a bit of encouragement.
>
> *(Danthonia Secondary)*

One of the primary teachers also mentioned the learner-initiated interaction that occurred when students greeted and/or attempted to speak to her in L2 in the playground.

Most teachers described teacher-directed and peer interaction in ways which suggested that they regarded them as equally valuable. The following comment by the teacher from Eremophila Secondary illustrates this:

> I focus on listening and speaking…That's something that you can get into as a student. I find that students get instant gratification from that and it could be something a simple as being able to answer, 'When's your birthday?' or whatever in a foreign language. But to be able to have that exchange successfully is quite a quick thing to achieve. So, a lot of speaking and listening, trying to get them to do a lot of interactive work in groups and in pairs or with the teacher or whichever. I think that it is really important to try and keep the classroom quite dynamic and quite quick.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

Two secondary teachers, however, expressed concerns about peer interaction. The teacher from Nardoo Secondary indicated that teacher-directed interaction predominated in her class and that she found it more pedagogically effective than interaction between peers:

> …If by that term [interaction] we mean lots of group work… I'm not into that. Up front is what really works. And with this group I'm finding it works pretty well. The kids like structure…
>
> *(Nardoo Secondary)*

The teacher from Sassafras Secondary acknowledged the importance of pair and group work and students being in charge of their own learning, but felt that "when they do too much by themselves I'm letting them down a bit because they're not getting enough learning." She questioned the assumption that pair or group work, per se, necessarily led

to better learning. Her comments, below, critically target activities that lack purpose, structure and clear learning outcomes:

> But I think that sometimes there's a tendency to … just chuck a piece of paper in front of them and let them sort it out together and I think that sometimes can lead to students doing nothing. They [teachers] just get into that sort of attitude, oh well they're working in groups; they're probably learning something from each other. Maybe it's because I'm a control freak, I don't know.
>
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

8.2.2 Modes of interaction

In their discussion of interaction, almost all teachers concentrated on oral interaction, and most stressed that developing listening and speaking was their principal focus. The teacher from Eremophila Secondary, however, included interaction in the written mode. She talked about students "having the opportunity to communicate in the language and not just orally, but written – write an email to a friend talking about the holidays and what happened." From this she defined interaction more broadly as "having the opportunity to try and use the language for a purpose" and stressed the importance of learners having a real purpose for the interaction they engaged in, within the classroom. Several teachers also referred to non-verbal modes of interaction, such as the use of body language and commented on their own use of this mode when attempts to communicate with learners verbally did not succeed. One of the teachers noted that students utilised these various modes in their social interaction with each other in the classroom, as well as during interaction tasks set by the teacher.

8.2.3 Teachers' language choices

The teachers in this study generally felt that for their interaction with their learners to be effective, it had to occur in L1 as well as L2. At the same time, they acknowledged the need to strive to interact with their students as much as possible in L2, but saw operating mainly in L2 as something of an ideal[1]. Secondary teachers were more likely than their

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[1] In fact, nine of the ten teachers used mainly L2 on average between 4%-49% of the time in the five lessons observed; they used a mixture of L1 and L2 on average between 22%-74% of the time and used mainly L1 between 11%-62% of the time. The teacher from Hibbertia Primary, whose students were doing self-access tasks, used L2 most of the time when she interacted with pairs or small groups of students and when managing the whole class, at the beginning and end of lessons.

primary counterparts to stress the need to maximise the use of L2 during lessons and also commented at greater length on problems they experienced in attempting to do this.

The teacher from Sassafras Secondary aimed to use L2 as much as possible and actually used it more often (around 50% of the time) and more consistently with her Year 10 class than the other secondary teachers observed as part of this study. She liked to introduce her lessons in French, describing this as "…just a little interaction where I ask questions and they answer, just to set the scene, get them into this French mode." She explained how she attempted to immerse her learners in L2:

> …instead of giving a little [of L2] bit by bit at a time and making them feel secure like that, my philosophy is to create a secure environment and then bombard them with language so that they learn to cope with over- exposure to language, but have the strength to do it because they feel comfortable in their environment.
>
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

However, she acknowledged the practical difficulties of L2 use:

> What does interaction mean? …Well, where possible in the target language, but it's not always practical.
>
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

She noted, that "some things have to be explained in English." This usually included more complex explanations related to grammar and lengthy instructions for tasks.

Maintaining students' motivation and keeping them engaged in the lesson were key factors in deciding whether to restrict or expand L2 use for the teacher from Sassafras Secondary, especially during interaction with the whole class. These two concerns were also mentioned by the other teachers. Attempts by the teacher from Wilga Primary to conduct lessons mainly in L2 led to students feeling confused, so she tended to restrict its use:

> I've attempted with a couple of classes to use it [L2] with the whole lesson and I just found that they were a bit bamboozled, so I thought, well, at one lesson a week, I just found that you can use the basic, but not the whole time.
>
> *(Wilga Primary)*

This teacher thought that the limited time allocation for teaching languages in primary schools was a key reason for her lack of success in using mainly L2 in her lessons.

The teacher from Orania Secondary felt that, with her students, use of L2 had to be gradual to be successful:

> I know that the type of kid we have here, I've tried it, even in Year 11 and it doesn't work going in at the beginning and speaking the target language. It frightens them because they just feel totally lost. So I try to build more and more as they get older, I use more and more, particularly in instructions and things, so that they get more used to it.
>
> *(Orania Secondary)*

This teacher's concentration on gradually increasing the use of L2, especially in the management context[2] has intuitive appeal, especially as "instructions can be easily taught, frequently used … and understood from context" (Polio & Duff, 1994, p.322). However, Oliver and Mackey (2003) found that interaction in this context appeared to provide fewer opportunities for learner language development than in the other classroom contexts.

The comment from the teacher from Orania Secondary quoted above hinted at student resistance to L2 use by the teacher. Several other secondary teachers alluded to such resistance on the part of students, including the teacher from Eremophila Secondary. However, this teacher found that perseverance resulted in the development of students' understanding and a lessening of their resistance:

> I would like to use more [of L2] than I do. And I tend to cave in when I'm tired, I've had a full teaching day and I just feel that I don't have the patience to struggle through with it when they're resisting, because they do resist. And they'll say, 'I don't know' and you really need to have a solid few weeks of that before they start really thinking, 'Oh, I do understand what she's talking about', before they stop saying, 'I don't get this'.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

As this teacher suggests, constant use of L2 demands considerable effort from teachers, especially if they are not native speakers. The resulting teacher fatigue, as well as student resistance, also explains why teachers revert to L1.

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[2] Macaro (1997), in his discussion of interaction in LOTE classes, also seems to concentrate very much on L2 use in the management context. This restricted view of L2 use in classroom interaction may reflect an emphasis in the initial introduction of the communicative approach in the LOTE classroom.

Teachers were very conscious of the need to make the L2 they used comprehensible to their learners. This was something stressed by the teacher from Nardoo Secondary, who identified some of the strategies she employed to achieve this:

> It makes sense that you should use the target language as much as you can. But I'm conscious of the fact that if I speak too quickly or if I use language that's far too complicated for them, of course I lose them anyway, because there's no point using the target language when it's just too much and they really don't understand. I guess some people do. I'm conscious of the fact that I'm using the target language at a speed that is relevant to the group and just using stuff that I think they can understand and maybe just stretching them out a little bit at a time.
>
> *(Nardoo Secondary)*

The two interrelated strategies mentioned by this teacher are supported by SLA research studies. They involve providing modified input by simplifying the language and slowing down delivery while at the same time ensuring that the input provided offers the learner a modicum of challenge, as per Krashen's (1981) *i+1*.

In essence, the teachers in this study recognised the importance of maximising their own use of L2 in their language classes, but were pragmatic about their need to use L1. The factors they identified as influencing them to use L1 when interacting with their learners were similar to those identified by the university foreign language teachers whose L2 use was studied by Polio and Duff (1994). Chief among these for the primary and secondary teachers was a fear of 'losing' students because they could not easily comprehend the L2 spoken to them. These teachers, like the FL university teachers studied by Polio and Duff (1994), put high value on establishing rapport with students and creating a comfortable and enjoyable classroom atmosphere and used L1 to achieve this.

8.3.4 Learners' language choices and responses to communication difficulties

Both primary and secondary teacher reported that learners were able to use formulaic L2 questions for transactional purposes, e.g., asking permission to go to the toilet or the meaning of an L2 word or how to say a word in L2. However, both groups of teachers reported considerable reluctance on the part of learners to initiate interaction in L2 with them, as the following comments testify:

> …they're very good at responding but not questioning.
>
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

> What they won't tend to do is ask me questions in French. Asking questions is one of the things that comes last in language learning…
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

> …wanting children to interact in the target language is the hardest part of my teaching. It's most difficult to get that out of them.
>
> *(Pittosporum Primary)*

> …using the target language, I find they're very reticent to…
>
> *(Orania Secondary)*

The teacher from Nardoo Secondary noted that a couple of students with an intense interest in Italian and above average language learning ability took every opportunity to use the L2 with her and each other. Most of the other students in her class, however, were reluctant to use L2 if they didn't know the form of the sentence or the question they wanted to ask. Most teachers also acknowledged that students completing interactive tasks in pairs or groups often reverted to L1.

The issue of how learners dealt with communication breakdowns was discussed with both primary and secondary teachers. The general consensus was that learners tended to use L1 in preference to L2, whether interacting with the teacher or with peers. The teacher at Wilga Primary indicated that she often spoke to students in L2 about what she had done over the weekend and had given students strategies for picking out key words to help them get the gist of her recount. She had also taught them, "Non capisco" *(I don't understand),* as an alternative to the "Uhs?" and "Ehs?" she typically got from students. The teacher from Acanthus Secondary thought that she had heard some of her students negotiate for meaning when they had communication difficulties, but added that it was something students would need to practice. This teacher and her secondary colleagues seemed to regard the capacity to negotiate for meaning in L2 as a skill that it was more appropriate to expect from students studying languages at senior secondary level. The secondary teachers also indicated that they focused on developing this skill at that level:

I don't know because that's something that I concentrate on particularly in upper school. It's a matter of time, because, with two hours a week, I honestly don't think that a Year 10 could do that. Maybe they should do.

(Sassafras Secondary)

8.3.5 Activities that promote interaction in L2

Collectively, teachers identified the following activities as those that promoted interaction in L2 among students:

- role plays;
- pair work to create dialogues;
- games;
- performing plays;
- using L2 written texts;
- information gap tasks;
- dictogloss
- speaking tasks prepared for assessment; and,
- teacher-fronted interaction.

Of these activities, only role plays were mentioned by all ten teachers and the last four were discussed by secondary teachers only.

'Role plays' were usually model dialogues that pairs or groups of students had to adapt and/or extend and then learn and perform, sometimes with the support of palm cards. The teacher from Danthonia Secondary felt that the type of activity where learners had to create their own dialogue from a model encouraged her students to 'speak a bit more'. The performance element of role plays is what primary teachers and some secondary teachers thought made this type of activity popular with their students and, from their perspective, provided opportunities for interaction in L2. However, the teacher from Sassafras Secondary noted that role plays were not necessarily popular with all students, but stressed the value of setting up 'real-life' situations like a telephone conversation or a restaurant scene for role plays. This teacher agreed with the researcher's observation that role plays as described above generally required little or no improvisation or spontaneous use of language and were thus essentially rehearsed performances. She also agreed that a

greater degree of improvisation might be desirable, but believed that her Year 10 students would feel very threatened if they had to improvise their spoken interaction. However, she indicated that she encouraged improvisation among Year 11 students.

All four primary teachers and one secondary teacher thought that games promoted interaction in L2. Games mentioned by these teachers were those that tended to focus on vocabulary, such as 'Who is it?' Practice activities, especially in the primary classes were also often in the form of games. Two examples are given of the kind of games/activities referred to. The first, from a primary class, is a vocabulary review activity. It required individual students from two teams to simultaneously read words on flash cards placed in two lines that faced each other on the floor. When students met face to face at the end of their line they played 'rock, paper, and scissors' in L2 in order to determine the 'winner'. The second example, the 'Running Board' game, comes from a lesson given by the secondary teacher who mentioned games as an effective means of engaging her learners. In this game the class is divided into two teams. The teacher calls out a sentence in English, the correct translation of which has to be written on the board by a person from the designated team. If an error is made a person from the opposite team takes over and this continues until the sentence is written correctly or the teacher intervenes.

The games described above concentrate on giving learners opportunities to practice or accurately reproduce individual lexical items or larger chunks of language, rather than providing opportunities for conversational interaction. This suggests that teachers may have been thinking of 'active participation' rather than 'interaction' when they expressed the view that games promoted interaction or that they did not really distinguish between the two terms.

Interestingly, only primary teachers specifically referred to activities based around L2 written texts as promoting interaction. Activities mentioned involved small group or pair work based around texts that were sometimes preceded by whole-class teacher-directed reading of the text. In the secondary classes, tasks involving L2 written texts most

commonly consisted of reading comprehension tasks where the students read the text and answered questions about it in L1.

Teachers' discussion of activities that promote interaction in L2 suggests that they conceptualised interaction very broadly and were perhaps thinking as much of learners' interaction *with* L2 as with their interaction *in* L2. For example, the teacher from Pittosporum Primary indicated that she liked her students to work on cloze activities in small groups because it provided them with the support for language production they needed. She mentioned students reading sentences, having to find words and collaborating with one another to complete the task. However, it was clear from her comments that students were not likely to interact about the task in L2, although the latter was something that she thought would develop through ongoing exposure to L2 input. The teacher from Wilga Primary spoke of an activity based around an L2 version of a McDonald's menu. The text, which was linguistically rather difficult but dealt with a very familiar topic and contained some vocabulary in English, was read by the teacher and class together. The teacher encouraged the students to guess key vocabulary by pointing out cognate words, as well as providing explanations of other difficult words and phrases. As a follow-up activity, students designed their own special burger and were then supposed to describe it to their partner, but most did not have time to complete the second part of the activity. This task had potential for generating L2 interaction among peers; however, its structure did not necessarily require students to do more than present their descriptions to each other. The teacher's discussion of this task stressed students' interaction *with* the language as she questioned them about the text, rather than interaction *in* the language, and the importance of exposing the more able students to more challenging texts.

The last four of the activities listed above were mentioned by secondary teachers only. However, information gap activities were used by a primary and a secondary teacher in the lessons observed. Another secondary teacher mistakenly labelled an oral cloze activity as an information gap task. The secondary teachers from Eremophila and Acanthus secondary who commented on information gap tasks believed that information gap tasks

encouraged their learners to interact in L2. One indicated that she included at least one of these tasks in each topic that she taught and thought they were good because students were presented with "a situation that might really happen, so they can work with their language to try and exchange information." In discussing information gap tasks, this teacher emphasised the need for learners to be familiar with key vocabulary in order to maintain communication when undertaking the tasks. She remarked on the paucity of resources that had examples of such tasks with supporting vocabulary, saying she could only think of one such resource for French.

Only the teacher from Sassafras Secondary reported using dictogloss. The strength of this activity, in this teacher's opinion, was not only that it promoted meaningful exchanges in L2, but also that it fostered an appreciation for accuracy and provided a structure in which stronger learners could help weaker peers. Teachers from Orania and Danthonia Secondary considered that oral tasks that were part of the formal assessment program encouraged learners to prepare thoroughly for and perform speaking tasks. These included dialogues that student pairs performed as 'role plays' and teacher-student interviews that gave students an opportunity to talk about familiar topics. The increasing emphasis on assessment in Year 10 is perhaps a reflection of the influence of the upper secondary curriculum on lower secondary classroom practice. This appeared to be the case in the use of interviews on everyday topics reported in a number of the Year 10 classes. These interviews appeared to be modelled on those used as part of the Tertiary Entrance Examination (TEE) to test oral performance[3].

Two secondary teachers thought that teacher-fronted interaction typical of whole class Q/A activity encouraged learners' interaction in L2. The teacher from Nardoo Secondary considered her modelling L2 use to be the crucial factor to the effectiveness of this type of activity. Her colleague from Acanthus Secondary, on the other hand, felt that the key motivator in this situation was students knowing that they had "all eyes were on them". What emerged from these two teachers' discussion of teacher-fronted activities was a concern for accuracy that was not matched by a similar level of concern for fluency. This

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[3] This is the examination taken by Year 12 students who are applying for university entrance.

concern for accuracy over fluency was also reflected in the types of activities identified collectively by teachers as promoting interaction and from the way in which they conceptualised role plays. While the preoccupation with accuracy was more marked among the secondary teachers, it was, nevertheless, a concern for all teachers. There are a number of possible reasons for this. One possible reason is teachers' own experiences as second language learners and users. Another is the importance placed on correctness by classroom culture in general. A likely influence on secondary teachers is the approach to assessment in upper secondary courses, where accuracy is important to success in the competitive examinations at the end of these courses. The outcomes-based descriptors of student achievement used by teachers in Western Australia (see Appendix 1) could also have contributed to the preoccupation with accuracy among all of the teachers. While the descriptors purport to be developmental, the outcomes-based descriptors emphasise performance and draw on a conceptualisation of second language learning that more accurately reflects the collective wisdom of the languages teachers at the time of their development, than SLA research[4]. A final factor is teachers' own conceptualisation of second language learning which is discussed in the next section of the chapter.

In discussing activities that promote interaction in L2, teachers also drew attention to particular characteristics of activities and general conditions they considered to be important. Both primary and secondary practitioners stressed the need for activities to be on topics that engaged and were of interest to learners. All teachers also spoke of the need to provide appropriate support to learners attempting to carry out interactive tasks. This could be in the form of direct support given by the teacher or through access to resources such as dictionaries or individual vocabulary sheets or visual and written texts or charts pinned up around the classroom. However, primary teachers thought that activities were more likely to promote interaction if they were hands-on and had a physical activity component. Secondary teachers, on the other hand stressed the need for tasks to have clear communicative purposes and clear outcomes, and to involve real-life situations. With regard to information gap tasks, the teacher from Eremophila Secondary thought that

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[4] Mitchell (2000, p. 24) criticised the National Curriculum Attainment Targets for speaking (the English version of the Western Australian Listening and Responding and Speaking Outcome Statements) for an undue emphasis on accuracy which does not reflect research-based views of interlanguage development.

familiarity with key elements of the language needed to perform the task was important in enabling learners to maintain communication. In her opinion, this familiarity could best be acquired by practising the required language beforehand in a number of different contexts.

Although teachers were conscious of their role as facilitators of interaction, they were also aware of the practical limitations on their capacity to give support to and monitor all pairs/groups during activities that involved peer interaction in the classroom. Several teachers commented on students with hands raised, patiently waiting for help, when viewing brief lesson segments during their interview. They noted regretfully that they had not been able to help those students during the lesson either because they had not seen them or had not been able to get to them.

8.4 Discourse about interaction and concepts of language learning

This section examines teachers' discourse about interaction as revealed by the interviews conducted with them, and discusses what this discourse seems to imply about their concepts of language learning and ideas about negotiated interaction.

8.4.1 Participation and practice

The study by Breen et al. (1998, p.69) investigated the principles and practices of ESL teachers and found that their principles were not necessarily "related to specific theories of second language learning or teaching…but grounded in their experience and the immediate context of practice." The discourse of teachers in this study about interaction was also mainly derived from their experience and practice.

Key terms in the teachers' discourse about interaction were *participation* and *practice*. The need to ensure students' active participation in language activities was an ongoing concern for teachers. All expressed a desire to create a classroom climate that would make learners want to be involved in the language learning process and to create opportunities for practice that were relevant and interesting to them. Primary teachers stressed the need to ensure that the learners really enjoyed the language learning

experience, that they felt comfortable using the L2 and that they would be able to talk about things in L2 that were interesting and meaningful to them. Views on how to achieve this differed from teacher to teacher. For the teacher from Hibbertia Primary, providing opportunities for participation was tied up with a move away from teaching that emphasised an explicit grammatical focus. For her colleague from Pittosporum Primary, it involved a holistic approach, allied to that used in immersion programs. The teachers from Wilga and Correa Primary, on the other hand, put greater emphasis on the need for structured practice. For example, the teacher from Wilga Primary described how she drew on and adapted her own positive experience of being taught Japanese in a very structured way that involved oral drills supported by visual clues via flash cards. The teacher from Correa Primary also stressed practice, describing the learning process as, "…a bit like making Lego walls."

Secondary teachers' explanations of how to promote student participation focused on teacher qualities and learner engagement through appropriate and stimulating tasks that contributed to oral language development. The dynamism of the teacher and her enthusiasm were seen as central to gaining learners' participation by the teachers from Eremophila, Sassafras and Orania Secondary. The teachers from Eremophila, Acanthus and Danthonia Secondary also identified the use of a variety of tasks, including those that students liked, such as games, as of prime importance in encouraging participation. In addition to these factors, the teacher from Eremophila Secondary highlighted the need to give students choice about working independently or as part of a group:

> I think you really need to engage the student at a level of variation in terms of activities, the macro-skills, whether it be group or independent, or the option of choosing to do one or the other.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

Their colleague from Nardoo Secondary, on the other hand, stressed opportunities for participation that enabled students to gain control over formal elements of the language.

A building block concept of second language learning, similar to that which characterised synthetic language syllabuses (grammar/translation , audio-lingual, functional/notional) seemed to underlie the thinking of a number of the teachers. This was evident in the

comments of the teachers from Wilga and Correa Primary, referred to above and can also be seen in the comments of the following two secondary teachers:

> … small bits of information presented in lots of different ways and trying to keep the pace pretty quick, because with a beginners' language course you're covering such a small amount of content that's brand new.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

> Well, I teach a lot through games, getting the kids involved from games starting with simple vocab drills, to putting sentences together or more difficult grammar points. I do probably a lot of group work, pair work, role plays - that sort of thing.
>
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

For the secondary teachers in particular, developing the pre-requisite building blocks for learning was linked to the need for learners to develop conscious knowledge about the grammar of their L2. There were differences of emphasis within the secondary group and with the teachers of Italian tending to discuss the issue in more traditional terms than those of French. For instance, the teacher from Nardoo secondary articulated her views in fairly traditional terms:

> I'm probably more from the old school of teaching languages and my faith in grammar input is very much part of how I'm still teaching and I find it really hard to let go of that. The greatest success I've had is to give them a little bit of grammar and just go on with it more and more and more as they get older. I suppose that language-wise, that's the thing that is at the back of my mind all the time. I teach with a grammar foundation and idea.
>
> *(Nardoo Secondary)*

Her colleagues from Acanthus and Danthonia Secondary discussed grammar in terms of the tenses they thought learners had mastered through the current topic or that underlay the structures the structures learnt in that topic.

The teachers of French were more indirect in their discussion of grammar with the teacher from Orania Secondary talking about "sneaking in some grammar" and the teacher from Sassafras focusing on accuracy:

> We want them to speak and communicate, that's still our main aim.   But at the same time we want to introduce a bit of accuracy as well.
>
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

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The teacher from Eremophila Secondary spoke of the limitations to learners' language development if a focus on oral language development excluded a more explicit focus on grammar. She indicated that her school's academic orientation and higher than normal time allocation for Year 10 LOTE classes meant that she had time to cover the grammar content she felt students needed. Indeed, the accelerated program she provided for a Year 10 student particularly gifted in languages from another class included both oral language extension and the study of grammar in greater breadth and depth.

The points made by this teacher echo observations made by DeKeyser (1998) when examining the role of practice in learning second language grammar. DeKeyser (1998p. 62) indicated that the findings of cognitive psychology about the role of practice in second language learning suggest that "all practice designed to make the student more skilled at fluent production of the language…should avoid being exclusively forms-focused or exclusively meaning- focused; otherwise it cannot contribute to transformation of knowledge into a behavioral pattern that consists of linking forms with meaning." He added that these findings "do not contradict what we have learned from second language acquisition or applied linguistics research, provided one is careful about interpreting that research."

8.4.2 Participation, practice and negotiated interaction

The teacher interviews revealed that, for these practitioners, the crucial nexus between interaction and language learning lay in the opportunities for practice that interaction provided. Fundamentally, these teachers appeared to believe that the key to their students' language development and learning lay mainly in the provision by them of multiple opportunities for practice that were, as far as possible, meaningful, relevant and of interest to the learners. Primary teachers, in particular, seemed unfamiliar with the terms *negotiated interaction* and *negotiation for meaning*. Secondary teachers indicated more familiarity with these terms, with the exception of one who said she had never encountered them. What teachers understood by the terms varied. A primary teacher associated 'negotiation for meaning' with use of formulaic language. A secondary teacher

illustrated what she meant by the terms with an example which seemed to be more about students' capacity to reflect about language:

> …they'll say, *fait, fait,* it comes from *faire* doesn't it?... they'll pick up a word they know and start sifting back and try to find a link, to try and make meaning from it. So, they are certainly capable of doing that and lots of them will do it.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

The teacher from Danthonia Secondary seemed to come closest to exemplifying what 'negotiated interaction' and 'negotiation for meaning' might actually involve:

> When students aren't sure what something means and I give them hints, I think that's what it means. I give them hints; I might explain it in another term, in easier terms in Italian. That's what I think it means….They might ask in Italian what it means. They usually say to me, *"Cosa vuol dire?"* Some of them don't and I sometimes I like to be able to try and explain in the target language to see if they can still understand the meaning.
>
> *(Danthonia Secondary)*

Some teachers were not convinced that their learners would be able to 'negotiate for meaning' in either teacher-fronted or peer interaction. However, a couple of secondary teachers thought some of their learners might carry out this kind of negotiation or could be taught this skill if time allowed. Despite somewhat shaky knowledge, comments made by several of the teachers showed that they reflected on aspects of interaction in beneficial ways. After watching a video segment of a Q/A activity from one of their lessons[5], the teachers from Acanthus, Eremophila and Sassafras Secondary commented on the importance of aspects of the interaction process such as 'wait-time' and use of feedback. The teacher from Sassafras Secondary explained how she had learned the value of 'wait-time' and why she thought it to be pivotal to learners' capacity to respond:

> When I started out teaching, I taped myself interviewing students …and the thing that struck me was that I was always butting in. And that was very good feedback for me because sometimes you do want to help students and you butt in before they finish. Now some people are a bit slow in their response….So I've basically taught myself not to do it and I give kids more thinking time, just waiting before panicking or they may not know it. Because some kids are not so verbally inclined to respond, so I like waiting and giving them time, it's quite important.
>
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

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[5] See Table 9.2 for a brief description of the teacher-fronted activities involved.

The teacher from Acanthus Secondary, reflecting on her own behaviour during the Q/A activity reviewed on video, noted that students could benefit from having more time to answer:

> Looking at that I probably think I don't do that 'wait' thing enough, like give the kids a chance to, I think I'm prompting a little too early and a little too much there. I probably need to give them a bit more of that 'wait' time, like just to try and answer for themselves. And then when the student obviously answered for the wrong meal, probably he needed a bit of correction, I gave the right answer, but I think I need to wait longer.
>
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

The comments of these two teachers provide insight into why teacher-fronted interaction seems to offer students less opportunity to use feedback than peer interaction, as Oliver (2000) found when she compared students' response to feedback in the two participation structures. Several teachers also pointed to the influence of expectations about the roles of teachers and learners. As the teacher from Acanthus Secondary observed about students' relatively passive role in teacher-fronted interaction involving Q/A 'conversation', students were "…probably just used to the teacher instigating the question and keeping it [the conversation] flowing."

The teachers from Sassafras and Eremophila Secondary discussed their use of feedback and stressed that the type employed depended on the context and individual to whom they were responding. The teacher from Sassafras Secondary commented on her own use of implicit negative feedback, saying she used it quite deliberately with the Year 10 class involved in this study because of the learners' sensitivity to being corrected in an overt manner[6]. A similar rationale seemed to be behind the way the teacher from Erempophila Secondary used various kinds of feedback during teacher-fronted exchanges:

> … if we're focusing on something, we have a little chat at the beginning of each class, focusing on that, so this is very much the warm-up and if someone says it incorrectly, sometimes, depending on the student, I'll repeat it back correctly, just trying to reinforce the sound of how it should sound, depending on whether the student has picked it up…sometimes it's just the reinforcement and then I usually make a comment to show that I've understood what they've said, so what

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[6] Transcripts of this teacher's lessons support this assertion. This teacher's preference for implicit rather than explicit negative feedback seems to be a response to students' needs rather than the application of current pedagogical recommendations about error correction, as found by Seedhouse (2001).

they've said in the language has been successful because someone who didn't know what they were going to say has been able to understand it.

(Eremophila Secondary)

8.5 Summary and discussion

This chapter addressed research question four, concentrating specifically on teachers' perceptions of interaction and its role in learning. The interviews revealed that most teachers in this study considered teacher-fronted and peer interaction equally important. The teachers emphasised the need to maximise their own use of L2 in their interaction with learners, but for mainly practical reasons felt this needed to occur in L1 as well as L2. Their discussion of interaction, whether teacher-fronted or between peers, stressed its role in providing students with varied opportunities for language practice in a meaningful context and in keeping them motivated through language learning activities that involved active participation.

The importance placed by teachers on practice and participation was reflected in the activities and tasks they identified as promoting interaction. In the main, these activities and tasks required students to recycle and reproduce known chunks of language rather than interact with the teacher or their peers to negotiate meaning and/or exchange real information. Interestingly, this tended to be the case even with two-way information gap tasks. Teachers appeared to be more concerned with accuracy rather than fluency, especially those secondary teachers who expressed the need for explicit grammar instruction. Activities often involved some form of performance, which also tended to encourage students to focus on accuracy.

The emphasis on practice in the teachers' discourse about interaction suggested underlying concepts of language learning based on the building block approach characteristic of synthetic syllabuses. Significantly, all teachers' discussion of interaction indicated little or no familiarity with SLA theory related to this aspect of language learning. This lack of familiarity was evident in the secondary teachers' attempts to describe what *negotiation for meaning* involved. Additionally, the teachers were not sure that their Year 10s would be able to this, or expressed the view that they could probably manage it with training.

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Several indicated it was a skill they sought to develop in senior language classes (Years11 and 12). Teachers' lack of familiarity with concepts such as *negotiation for meaning* suggests that teachers may not be very aware of the particular feedback techniques they use in their interaction with learners, how they deploy them and the impact of these techniques on student learning. However, several teachers reflected on aspects of interaction such as the need to give learners 'wait time' and their use of feedback in beneficial ways. Overall, teachers' perceptions of interaction as revealed by the interviews support the finding by Breen et al. (1998) and Crookes (1997) that teachers derive their concepts of language learning from experience and practice in their immediate contexts, rather than from theory and research.

The picture that emerges from these interviews is consistent with what was reported about teacher-student interaction in Chapters 5 and 6. This picture has a number of positive elements. As DeKeyser (1998) points out, practice is an important aspect of second language learning, especially in the LOTE context where students' exposure to the language is very often limited to the classroom. That the teachers interviewed aimed to engage and motivate learners by providing practice that promotes interaction through activities and tasks that are varied and meaningful, is both positive and desirable. The concern is that even in secondary classes, there appears to be little evidence of learners being required to move beyond recycling and re-using known language in predictable contexts. This accords with what Mitchell and Martin (1997) found in their longitudinal study of French teaching and learning in secondary schools in Great Britain:

> Despite the potential of the lesson time devoted to 'communicative' activities, in practice, these primarily offered occasions for further recycling and recombination of learned chunks, and rarely put pupils under real pressure to analyse and restructure them for communicative ends. Their communicative character seemed to have a motivational rationale at its heart, rather than a developmental one.
>
> (Mitchell & Martin, 1997, p. 24)

The teachers in this study appeared to have a similar rationale for their interactional practice, possibly deriving from underlying concepts of language learning closely related to the building block approach characteristic of synthetic syllabuses. Thus, it appears that

the teachers' conceptualisation of interaction lacks the theoretical constructs to enable them to move from just providing more practice to more effectively promoting learners' language development. This has implication for practice and points to a need for professional development, an issue that will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER 9
LEARNER PERCEPTIONS OF INTERACTION

9.1 Introduction

Interest in student perceptions of second language learning has been prompted by a number of factors, most significantly of which are a greater understanding of the impact of individual differences on learning and growing evidence for the importance of social and affective factors and learner agency in the language learning process. Studies have shown that learners may view particular and general aspects of the learning process and of classroom learning, their role in it and their own capacities differently from teachers and differently from each other (Garrett & Shortall, 2002; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan; 2002; Mackey, 2002; Mackey, Gass & McDonough, 2000; Tse, 2000). The relationship between these perceptions and language learning is also increasingly being investigated.

This chapter presents and discusses the perceptions of interaction of students from the classes involved in this research. As described in Chapter 3, small groups of volunteers[1] from of each of the ten classes studied were interviewed twice. Seventy one students participated in the first interview and 49 in the second interview. Most of the students who undertook the second interview also participated in the first. The interviews were transcribed and analysed (see Chapter 3 for details) to identify the main issues and concerns expressed by students.

Students expressed a range of views in response to the interview questions asked, issues raised and brief video segments of lessons viewed. Collective and individual views are presented and discussed under the following headings and are illustrated by brief quotes from students:

- The nature and purposes of interaction in L2;
- Responding to communication difficulties;

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[1] The groups included from 5-11students for the first interview and from 2-11 students for the second interview.

- Factors that encourage or discourage interaction in L2;
- Activities enjoyed most and least; and,
- How particular activities contribute to language learning.

9.2 The nature and purposes of interaction in L2

The majority of learners' comments regarding interaction were about interpersonal communication between themselves and the teacher and with other learners, either as individuals or part of a group. Some learners spoke generically about interaction with other students; most, however, referred specifically to their "friend(s)", "partner", "the person I'm sitting next to" or "the people I'm doing the worksheets with."

Interestingly, a couple of students also referred to intrapersonal communication, explaining how they spoke to themselves as part of the learning process. Two female primary students described this:

> I talk to myself when I memorise it. When we learn new things we have to practise it, so I say it to myself and I memorise it… in a whisper.
> *(Wilga Primary)*

> When I try to work out what to write down, when I'm doing a writing sheet in French, I try to say it.
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

Both of these students seem to be describing what Ohta (2001, p.153) and other sociocultural SLA theorists term 'self-addressed turns' or 'private speech', which has the following characteristics and functions:

> In private speech learners carve out their own interactive space, to produce a response that is not intended for a listener. These self-addressed turns are usually uttered with reduced volume when the learner is not the addressee, although learners can use private speech to formulate their own public turns.
> (Ohta, 2001)

Several instances of private speech were also found in the lesson transcripts. Use of private speech by learners may have been widespread; however, the limitations of the recording equipment meant that this kind of intrapersonal interaction was difficult to capture on tape.

The majority of learners appeared to have clear ideas about the contexts in and the purposes for which they needed to use L2 when interacting in the language class. Learners from all of the classes indicated they spoke in L2 with the teacher as part of the instructional cycle and mentioned teacher-generated greetings at the beginning of a class and other types of teacher-directed questions such as those employed either to introduce new work or as part of revision. Primary students mentioned individual and/or choral repetition of teacher-generated language. Students from Danthonia Secondary reported oral tests among the teacher-initiated activities requiring L2 interaction on their part. Students from both primary and secondary groups also included the teacher explanations[2] as examples of their own use of L2. Secondary students, in particular, felt that if the teacher addressed a question to them in L2, the expectation was that they would attempt to respond in that language. However, another learner stressed that she and her classmates were happy to use L2 in class, but they were not compelled to do so: "…we're not forced to, there's no compulsion, that can't be done…"

A number of students from both primary and secondary classes mentioned initiating interaction with the teacher in L2 for the following transactional purposes. These included asking:

- permission to go to the toilet or to get a drink;
- to borrow something from the teacher;
- for the L2 equivalent of an L1 word;
- the meaning of an L2 word or phrase; and,
- how to write something in L2.

The lesson transcripts from each of the classes contain examples of this kind of student-initiated L2 interaction, which generally involves the use of formulaic or well rehearsed chunks of language. Both primary and secondary teachers taught the language associated with such day-to-day transactions and encouraged students to use this language. However, most teachers in their interviews commented on the reluctance of students to

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[2] This would not necessarily have needed a spoken response but would have required that the students comprehend what was being said to them.

initiate interaction in L2, especially if this required them to go beyond well rehearsed, formulaic language. Learners' perceptions of what constrains them from using L2 is now outlined and discussed.

The constraint that students seemed to feel most keenly was that of lack of knowledge and lack of the appropriate language to express their requests or ideas. Lack of knowledge of essential structures or vocabulary was the main reason given by learners from both the primary and secondary groups for not asking the teacher questions in L2. This was the case for a student from Hibbertia Primary, who described her own attempts to use L2 generally during language lessons thus:

> Well, I try to speak French for the whole class, but there are some things I really don't know how to say yet.
>
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

Comments from other students point to a perceived inability to "put things together" as well as a lack of vocabulary and structures as being part of the problem:

> Actually talking to her in French, we've only learned certain phrases and we don't know words to put things together in French, you know like 'and'.
>
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

Similar sentiments were expressed by a student from Orania Secondary:

> We can't speak French. You're not good enough to actually have conversations in French …We know what that means and what that means, but we can't connect it to actually say something.
>
> *(Orania Secondary)*

However, students from the secondary class groups, in particular, pointed out that they attempted to communicate with the teacher in L2 if they felt they had the required language at their disposal.   Students from Nardoo Secondary indicated that they used L2 when they knew how to say what they wanted to say. A similar view was expressed by a student from Sassafras Secondary:

> Usually, when everyone actually knows how to say what we want to say in French, we speak French to her.
>
> *(Sassafras Secondary)*

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Nevertheless, even when a learner had the self-confidence to attempt an exchange in L2, very limited proficiency made it difficult to sustain such a dialogue to any extent. A student from Danthonia Secondary reported initiating a conversation in L2 with his teacher about the exchange students who were to visit the class, "just to speak Italian". He indicated that he was able to sustain the conversation "a little bit", but couldn't continue it for long because he "didn't know the vocabulary."

Students made similar comments about peer interaction as about teacher-learner interaction. Both the primary and secondary students indicated that use of L2 in peer interaction tended to be limited to the requirements of the task, "…like when she wants us to speak … have a dialogue to do." The following comment reflects the views of many of the students interviewed:

> …usually when you're talking to the person next to you, you only talk to them in Italian when we have an activity to do otherwise, when we want to say, 'Can we borrow your pen?', we don't usually speak in Italian…
> *(Danthonia Secondary)*

Instances of interaction in L2 with peers mentioned included class greetings where students asked each other how they were, pair-work tasks which might involve teacher-generated interview questions to gather personal information about one's partner, surveys, information gap activities and games. In the class at Nardoo Secondary, each lesson began with students spending about ten minutes writing their personal diary. A pair of learners from this class who usually worked together indicated that they discussed what they were writing with each other in a mixture of Italian and English, using such phrases as "Come si dice ~?"/*How do you say ~?* or "Che data è oggi?"/*What's the date today?* or "Che hai scritto?"/*What have you written?*

Having enough of the L2 to say what one wanted or was expected to say was an issue in this context as well as in teacher-directed interaction. "It's hard to speak French 'cos it's confining sometimes," observed a student from Eremophila Secondary. However, students indicated that if they felt confident or knew that they were working with friends who would help them out, they were more likely to use L2. The consensus among

students was that peer interaction promoted use of L2 for these reasons. Students from Acanthus Secondary felt interaction with peers was less scary and stressful than teacher-learner interaction, when there was an adult looking on. According to students from Eremophila, knowing that your friends would help you out boosted your confidence and encouraged L2 use during peer activities:

> You're a lot more confident (assent from others). Like, if you make a mistake…you help each other out.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

The view that learner-learner interaction is more congenial and relaxing than teacher-learner interaction was also held by the adolescent and adult EFL learners surveyed by Garrett and Shortall (2002) who operated in a similar formal learning context to the LOTE learners who participated in this research.

Students' comments about how they felt constrained in using L2 by their own linguistic limitations reflect findings by MacIntyre et al. (2002) that learners' perceptions of their proficiency correlate very strongly with their willingness to communicate (WTC). The increase in WTC between grades 7-10 (associated with increasing proficiency) reported by MacIntyre et al. was evident in the comments of a few of the secondary school students' interviewed (the equivalent of grade 10) as compared to those of the primary school students (most of whom were the equivalent of grade 6). Overall, however, the secondary school students appeared to be even more aware of their communicative shortcomings than the younger learners and commented on them more frequently, as the remarks of two secondary students illustrate:

> *Std 1:* We've learned all the words and names we've got to learn for this [the topic being taught], then you've got to put it all together – easily - off by heart.
>
> *Std 2:* I learned about that bit [an aspect of the topic being taught] but I usually forget when the teacher asks something on it.
>
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

The extent to which learners made consistent efforts to sustain use of L2 during peer activities varied. According to one student from Wilga Primary, they "sometimes spoke in English." Another remarked that, "A lot of people just skip the Italian and say it in English" when playing games in small groups. In discussing a group activity during

which they made an Italian dessert[3], several students from Acanthus Secondary admitted to speaking little L2 or only doing so when the teacher came in sight and earshot of their group[4]. Learners also reported using L1 to help fellow students, as when stronger students translated for the weaker students. Alternatively, they drew on L1 to support early attempts to communicate in L2, as described by a student from Hibbertia Primary:

> We usually just use like the nouns. But we don't actually, like we say the doing words in English and the nouns in French, that's what I do.
>
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

Analysis of the lesson transcripts suggests that continued use of L2 in peer interaction could only be sustained with activities that were highly structured and predictable, such as functional language practice. Beyond this, students relied heavily on L1. Like the students from the French immersion classes studied by Swain and Lapkin (2000), the functions for which they used L1 included task management, focusing on problematic aspects of language, as well as for social and off-task reasons.

Use of L2 for social interaction during peer activities was not common. Students from both the French and Italian classes indicated that they did not know L2 well enough to interact socially and therefore generally talked to their friends in L1, "because it was easier." This said, however, students from several classes reported enjoying trying to use L2 in playful ways. A couple of boys from Acanthus Secondary reported using L2 with each other "when you're saying something comical" and if they learned something new that they found interesting. Several boys from Nardoo Secondary admitted to speaking the L2 with each other then they were "mucking around." Students from Eremophila Secondary also indicated that they talked French socially to each other when the teacher was out of the class, "just for fun." The following comment from one of these students gives an idea of the social purposes for which learners used L2:

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[3] This had been preceded by a number of preparatory lessons where the students completed a range of interactive tasks to familiarise them with the structure and vocabulary needed for the group activity.

[4] On reflection, this may have as much to do with the nature of the activity as learner willingness or ability to use L2. Groups used the recipe that had been the basis of language work in the preparatory lessons, so they had little or no need to discover or discuss information related to the preparation of the dish. Cooking also demands a focus on immediate action in a way that probably discourages the students from using L2, because they do not have automatic access to language needed. Getting the groups to follow a less familiar recipe would introduce a stronger element of communicative need that might encourage more L2 use or at least examination of L2 via L1 through translation. However, the practical problems associated with this option might limit its viability and attractiveness in a large lower secondary class.

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The things that you say to your friends, you can just say hello or something simple like that or a greeting just in French. But you don't specifically talk about hotels out of the blue[5]. That's only when the teacher asks you.

(Eremophila Secondary)

Finally, although asked specifically about interaction in the L2 that occurred in the classroom, students from several of the primary and secondary interview groups also mentioned interacting with each other outside the classroom in order to exclude others:

Std 1: You say things, like you insult them, really badly, they won't even know. I do that all the time.

Std 2: I just automatically start saying *merci* to everyone, I don't know why. It's a habit.

(Eremophila Secondary)

Students also talked about trying to use the L2 with other speakers of their language who happened to be in the school such as student teachers on practicum and language assistants. In addition, several students reported practising it at home with parents or siblings who had some knowledge of the language or with family friends or older acquaintances they had met socially outside of school. One student described his attempt to interact with an Italian neighbour:

We've got a neighbour who's Italian. He's only been here for a couple of years. He doesn't know English much. His wife does so she can translate for us. I said, 'Hello. How are you?' He came back with the same kind of stuff. Some of the questions he asked I had no idea what he was saying, but I could kind of relate to it or use other words from other conversations in Italian.

(Acanthus Secondary)

9.3 Responding to communication difficulties

As Oliver and Mackey (2003), Long (1996) and others have observed, linguistic trouble is an important stimulus for the types of interaction needed to facilitate language development. Much of what occurred in the classes observed pointed to a strong impulse among teachers (and students) to prevent linguistic trouble occurring. The transcripts of the lessons showed that teachers often responded instinctively to perceived student incomprehension and immediately translated an L2 utterance into L1. For example, the teacher from Sassafras Secondary, who used L2 more often and more consistently than

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[5] The theme around which the class' activities had been structured was organising a trip to France.

most of the other teachers involved in this study, indicated that she monitored the students' response and translated from L2 into L1 if she had a sense that what she had said had simply not been understood. This type of response to linguistic 'trouble' is not necessarily advantageous to learners in the long term, but makes perfect sense in the hustle and bustle the languages class, where both teachers and students face multiple and competing demands. It is interesting, therefore, to have students' views of how they dealt with communication difficulties.

Students from the primary and secondary class groups reported using similar strategies when they did not understand the teacher or did not understand each other when doing pair or group work. Further, some of the strategies were also common to the two contexts. In teacher-fronted interaction, asking a friend to explain when the teacher's input was not comprehensible was mentioned by all students. Trying to figure out the meaning by listening for key or familiar words was another strategy frequently used by both primary and secondary students when interacting with the teacher. This might be combined with a clarification request (usually "What?") and/or asking for help from the teacher, as reported by a student from Wilga Primary:

> Sometimes you understand some of the words that she's saying and you can sort of figure out what she means. Otherwise I just ask.
> *(Wilga Primary)*

Some students reported requesting help immediately, while others preferred to do it later when the teacher was free and they could interact with her on an individual basis.

Other approaches mentioned by students was to use a dictionary, to guess and have a go at responding, to wait to see what other people would say or just "give her a blank look." Secondary students were certainly aware that use of the 'blank look' often induced the teacher to translate what she had said in L2 into L1 and primary students reported that teachers often came to their rescue, especially if they took a long time to respond:

> If we're a bit slow, it takes like ten minutes, she'll tell us.
> *(Correa Primary)*

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Students reported using similar strategies in peer interaction as they did in teacher-fronted interaction. Employing clarification requests in L1 ("What?"/"What are you trying to say?"/"What does that mean?"), orally or in writing was popular. Asking the teacher for help, consulting dictionaries, texts or related worksheets and referring to environmental print were approaches used when working with fellow learners. Other strategies students utilised to deal with a communication difficulties were to remain silent, to "really go along with it," to use non-verbal clues or to express lack of knowledge or understanding by using L2. A student from Wilga Primary describes how she and her partner responded to each other's lack of understanding:

> When I'm with A and I just look at her funny, I just go *(she makes a faces to signal incomprehension and everyone laughs)* and she goes, like she doesn't see and she says it really slowly and does that hand action, *non lo so.*
> *(Wilga Primary)*

"In English, it's easier" was the rationale given by many students and especially by students from the secondary groups for reverting to L1. However, limited comprehension and proficiency together with lack of communicative need seem to be underlying causes, as the following extract from the interview with the class group from Sassafras Secondary highlights:

> *Int:* When you do group work, whether its pair work or group work, how much of the time do you actually stick to French?
>
> *Std 1:* About 40% of the time.
>
> *Int:* What makes you drop back into English, when you do?
>
> *Std 1:* It's common because you don't *have* to speak French.
>
> *Std 2:* People can't understand you.
>
> *Std 3:* It's hard.
>
> *Std 1:* Your partner can't understand you. You say something and they go 'What?'
>
> *Int:* So, does it happen quite often when you're doing group work, that the person you talk to doesn't actually understand what you're saying.
>
> *All:* Yes.

Int: So what do you do then?

Std 2: Use English.

Std 1: Because we don't know enough French to explain it in French.
<div align="right">*(Sassafras Secondary)*</div>

The issue of communicative need is raised in turn 4 by Student 1 and that of comprehension difficulties by several students in turns 5 - 7. The final comment identifies proficiency as an issue for Student 1. The link between learners' own perceived level of linguistic competence and their willingness to communicate in L2 was established in the study by MacIntyre et al. (2002) which was discussed in the first part of the chapter.

It was evident from the student interviews (and corroborated by the classroom observation data) that communication breakdowns, whether they occurred with teachers or peers, were mainly resolved by students using L1. What was also clear from the students' comments is that they were more likely to try a range of strategies in teacher-fronted interaction, whereas when working with peers, defaulting to English occurred much more readily. Again this was corroborated by the classroom observation data.

9.4 Factors that encouraged or discouraged interaction in L2

Students identified a range of factors that encouraged them to interact in L2 in teacher-learner and peer interaction. They included:

- teacher attitudes and linguistic behaviours that were supportive and encouraging;
- being challenged by the teacher, peers or the task;
- integrative goals related to a desire to visit the target language country in the future and to be able to speak L2 as well as the teacher;
- instrumental goals related to enhanced performance in senior secondary L2 studies and examination success;
- a desire to directly experience cultural difference;
- frequent use of L2 by the teacher and other learners;
- familiarity with the topic, task and the specific language needed; and,
- having meaningful tasks to perform with the right kind of partner.

The views of primary and secondary students about these factors are discussed with reference to relevant literature and illustrated by students' comments from the interviews.

Teacher attitudes and linguistic behaviours were considered important encouraging factors by all students. In teacher-fronted interaction, how the teacher supported and encouraged their efforts was judged central to their capacity to engage in exchanges by both the primary and secondary students. Teacher encouragement and support was provided in a number of ways. Students from three of the four primary class groups and half of the secondary class groups mentioned the teacher making sure they were able to understand what she was saying by using visual clues and mime. They also considered teacher explanation of difficulties by using L2 words that were similar to English and by repeating the L2 questions as helpful. A number of students from the secondary groups mentioned being given adequate time to respond as important in their efforts to use L2, together with receiving an encouraging response when they tried to speak in L2 and made mistakes in the process. Like the adult FL learners whose perceptions of language learning were investigated by Tse (2000), the students in this study emphasised the importance of teacher attention and empathy in promoting interaction

While teacher support and encouragement were generally appreciated, some secondary students also found it useful to be challenged by the teacher. Receiving explicit correction and being pushed to use L2 were two examples mentioned. A student from Eremophila Secondary said she was encouraged to speak French, "Cos we have to, we've got no choice." Similar sentiments were expressed by a student from Acanthus Secondary who stated that, "If you hold back the teacher will just ask you" and, "She won't let you go without a turn." Moreover, compliance, as another student from Acanthus Secondary pointed out, also had its rewards:

> And if you show the teacher that you know what she's talking about then she'll move on to other things, better things.
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

Individuals in some primary groups also liked to be challenged and mentioned peer competition and the intellectual stimulation of trying to use L2 as encouraging factors. A student from Hibbertia Primary reported being encouraged to speak French during pair

work because "You can try and do better than your partner." Another student from Wilga Primary enjoyed teacher-directed Q/A sessions "because she does something that's challenging and it makes you think." The challenge for this student was that "Sometimes you forget the words."

Factors which had to do with integrative motivation were mentioned by individual students in both the primary and secondary class groups. Long term goals for visiting the target language country and perhaps working there were mentioned as sources of encouragement by secondary students. As students from several of the secondary schools would have the opportunity to go to the target language country in future years, this was a powerful motivation for these students. In the words of a student from Danthonia Secondary, "Knowing you're going to be there, you really need to be able to use the oral language." Individual students from primary school groups also mentioned the possibility of visiting the target language country as a source of encouragement for classroom L2 use.

Instrumental factors related to success in examinations were considered important by the secondary groups. This was particularly important for students from Sassafras Secondary, who mentioned preparation for studying their language at senior secondary level and the hope of better results in the tertiary entrance examination as things that stimulated them to use L2 in the classroom.

A desire to experience both linguistic and cultural 'difference' emerged as motivators for L2 use among students from most of the secondary groups. They reported being stimulated by the difference of L2, the newness of the experience of speaking it and, in the words of a student from Nardoo Secondary, the satisfaction of just being able "to say the stuff." Secondary students also found they appreciated the capacity to express themselves (however minimally) in a different code among their peers who did know their language. Students at this level also seemed to be becoming aware of the qualitative difference knowledge of the target language could have to one's experiences in the target language country. One student mentioned "Being able to talk to somebody in France, in French" as

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encouraging her to use L2 in the classroom and made the following observation about her own experience:

> I went over to France speaking English. You go over there and talk and you learn experiences and experience a different holiday.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

Some secondary students indicated that the more frequently L2 was used in the classroom the more they felt like using it themselves. Several students from Danthonia Secondary mentioned feeling more like using L2 if the teacher was speaking it and if everyone else in the classroom was also attempting to communicate in that language. A couple of students from one of the primary class groups found inspiration in their teacher's use and command of L2:

> She encourages me because she speaks it so well, and I hope I can speak it as well as her, so that sort of keeps me going.
>
> [It's sort of a bit of an ideal,] to speak like that.
>
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

For other students, communicative considerations such as understanding what was being said and actually having something to say encouraged them to use L2.   Finally, both primary and secondary learners seemed to draw encouragement from a belief that they would improve with the practice provided by sustained use of L2 with the teacher and each other.

Most of the features of teacher-learner interaction that encouraged L2 use were also mentioned in relation to interaction in peer activities. In particular, both primary and secondary class groups considered familiarity with the topic and the task as helpful to L2 production in both teacher-learner and peer interaction. The facilitative role of practice, especially in being able to remember relevant language was highlighted by a primary student who commented that, "When you've already done the word so many times you can remember it and do something with it." This accords with the finding by Kanganas (2002) and Mackey, Kanganas and Oliver (2007) that task familiarity enables learners to pay greater attention to the form of their utterances. Knowing that everyone makes mistakes also encouraged students to take the risk of expressing themselves in L2.

There was consensus among both primary and secondary learners that activities in pairs and/or groups where they worked with peers facilitated their use of L2. Like the students studied by Garrett and Shortall (2002), these learners found the peer interaction less threatening than teacher-learner interaction. Their friends were less likely to pass judgement on them about the quality of their language production than the teacher. They laughed and joked together about each other's mistakes and were helpful and supportive:

> *Std 1:* You're a lot more confident [when working with friends]. (*Assent from others in background.*) Like, if you can make a mistake and you…
>
> *Std 2:* … like you help each other out.
>
> *Std 1:* …the teacher knows everything. So if you make a mistake, you feel stupid, but your friends, they understand the same words as you.
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

The importance of meaningful communication with a partner who was more or less at the same level of proficiency and interest was stressed by some of the learners from the secondary groups, who reported feeling good about understanding each other in these situations, as the comments from the following two students illustrate:

> *Std1:* Maybe if you were working with someone who wasn't as enthusiastic as you [it's hard to participate in a peer activity]. Student 2 is just as enthusiastic as me and we tend to get on really well, but I've worked with other people and they tend to like talk to someone else behind you and you're trying to do the exercise.
>
> *Std 2:* That's really hard, because you can't talk as much as you'd like to and they find it hard to understand and can't quite answer back?
> *(Nardoo Secondary)*

The views of these students are consistent with those of the students in the study by Garrett and Shortall (2002). Learners' observation about the need to be at a similar level of proficiency is of relevance given the problems between high and low proficiency partners reported by Yule and Macdonald (1990).

However, other information examined in the first two sections of this chapter about the extent to which students used L2 in peer activities suggests that although students might feel encouraged to use the target language in peer activities, it was also very easy for them to default to L1 in these circumstances. So, while peer activities may be perceived by learners as facilitative of L2 use, any assessment of potential benefits has to be balanced

against the actual extent of that use and the purposes for which L1 was used. As Swain and Lapkin (2000) found, the extent of L1 use can be considerable, even among immersion learners with relatively high proficiency levels. In addition, factors that encouraged interaction in L2 in peer activities have to be considered alongside those that were a source of discouragement. These are now discussed.

In broad terms, what students reported as discouraging them from interacting in L2 was similar for students from primary and secondary groups and for activities that were teacher-directed as well as those that involved student-student interaction. The main factors clustered around a number of fears: fear of making mistakes and the related fear of embarrassment and discomfort at seeming stupid in front of peers and being laughed at; fear of not knowing or not knowing enough; and, fear of not feeling confident. There were, however, differences of detail and emphasis between primary and secondary students. Other factors that emerged from the data were: partner relationships and perceived difficulty of tasks and the ease of reverting to L1.

Fear of getting something wrong or making mistakes featured in the comments of learners from three of the four primary schools: Wilga, Hibbertia and Correa. Fear of mispronouncing words was mentioned by students from Wilga and Hibbertia Primary. For a learner from Hibbertia Primary, the fear of making mistakes was most acute when interacting with the teacher:

> When she talks in a whole class situation you'd think you'd understand too, she thinks that you know what you're talking about, but then when it's individual and there's stuff you don't know what she's talking about, so you get all frightened.
>
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

Her fellow classmate articulated why interaction with the teacher was potentially more confronting:

> Yeah. Like when you can't say it properly, then I prefer to say it in English. Because, of her authority and everybody would like to have her respect. You don't want to lose face. You want to get it right. I probably would look stupid. Sometimes I guess people would laugh at me. I'm actually not like that, but still.
>
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

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Fear of being laughed at was also a concern for learners from Wilga and Correa Primary. It should be noted, however, that students could be resilient about their peers' unkind reactions and had ways of dealing with them, as the following comment from a primary student indicates:

> Sometimes then [when the student is laughed at] you feel a bit down, but the main thing is that you keep going and you don't worry about what other people think.
>
> *(Wilga Primary)*

Fear of making mistakes and being laughed at was inhibiting for students from the secondary groups as well, some of whom reported adopting the strategy of waiting to hear what others said before taking the risk of venturing to speak themselves. Students from the secondary groups also reported being discouraged by not understanding what the teacher said, by lack of self confidence and fear of just not being able to produce the language that was needed spontaneously. A comment from a student from Acanthus Secondary illustrates this last preoccupation:

> We've learned all the words and names we got to learn for this [the topic the class was doing], then you've got to put it all together – easily – off by heart.
>
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

Peer relationships emerged as an issue in interesting ways. For learners from two of the primary groups, the issue was one of gender[6]. Girls from Wilga Primary[7] found the teasing and know-all behaviour of boys discouraging for interaction in L2. The girls were critical, but also rather scornful of the boys' attitude, as the following exchange indicates:

> *Std. 1:* They reckon they know it all and then they reckon they change the correction…
>
> *Std. 2:* And then when it's their turn they get it wrong. *(Laughs)*
>
> *(Wilga Primary)*

Students from several of the secondary groups also expressed concern about peer behaviour (in teacher-directed and peer activities) but not in relation to gender. A conscientious and seemingly very able student from Orania Secondary found fellow

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[6] Hibbertia Primary was an all girls' school, so gender difference was not an issue there.
[7] Interestingly, although Wilga Primary was not a single sex school, only girls volunteered to take part in the interviews; consequently, boys' views on this issue are not represented in the interview data.

students who did not want to study a language and therefore misbehaved impeded L2 interaction. Off-task behaviour in peer interaction was a negative factor for students from Danthonia Secondary. Mismatches in partners' ability and enthusiasm for a task were considered equally discouraging by a number of student groups. Having to work with a partner they did not want to work with or vice versa was mentioned as discouraging L2 interaction by a number of students. As noted earlier, this sensitivity about having a suitable partner echoes the findings of research by Garrett and Shortall (2002) and connects with the results of studies by Yule and Macdonald (1990) and Storch (2002), all of whom drew attention to the impact of affective factors and relationship issues in the peer interaction of adult foreign language and ESL students.

A perception of the L2 or a particular task being 'hard' made interaction in L2 daunting for learners from the primary classes. Those from the Wilga and Hibbertia Primary groups spoke about words that were hard because they were long or hard to pronounce and this caused them anxiety. The students from Pittosporum and Correa Primary School groups linked words being 'hard' with not knowing a word or forgetting something that had been learned. Secondary learners were discouraged by tasks that were linguistically hard or made difficult because did not have enough time to respond. These difficulties reported by learners may reflect the particular demands that more communicative tasks make on beginning learners and their ongoing need for both linguistic and contextual support in order to engage in interaction, as argued by Batstone (2002). Tasks themselves were sometimes just hard to manage. A student from Eremophila Secondary found that, when doing a two-way information gap task, much of her attention was taken up with the logistics of trying to extract information and relevant language from the worksheet given to learners to help do the activity.

In the discussion of what discouraged them from interacting in L2, the students from Acanthus Secondary mentioned the impact of factors such as: the weekly time allocation for LOTE classes; the fact that L2 was used only in the classroom; the limited time for practice; how easily the L2 that was learned in class was forgotten; and, the negative impact of being monolingual:

Std 1: It would be a lot easier if we knew a lot more as well, or if we were using it all the time.

Std 2: Because we only ever use it in the classroom and on the off chance in some other social occasions – we don't get much time to practice it.

Std 3: The fact that we were brought up with only one language, it's hard to learn another one afterwards.

Std 4: It's not at the same time. It's a different time. 'Cos if you learn two languages at the same time, when you're growing up it's easier.

(Acanthus Secondary)

What these students may have been trying to express in bringing up these matters was a sense of frustration at the very slow rate at which their proficiency developed. That learners do not necessarily feel successful in their language study was revealed in a study of adult foreign language learners by Tse (2000). Tse found that more than half of the participants perceived themselves as being unsuccessful in their language learning. The learners in Tse's study attributed their lack of success to insufficient effort or drive on their own part, while those in this research appear to identify contextual factors as constraining their interaction in L2 and possibly, in the longer term, their learning.

9.5 Activities enjoyed most and least

The activities involving L2 interaction that the primary and secondary class groups reported as enjoying most and least are presented in Table 9.1. The items listed are an aggregation of learner comments across the groups and were not necessarily mentioned in all the groups. Overall, the range of activities reported was rather limited and reflected the particular lessons observed and what teachers liked to use or felt students could achieve success with. Students from both primary and secondary groups mentioned written tasks among the activities they most enjoyed. One secondary student explained that it was "probably because I can actually see it, rather than have to think. It's easier when you're writing." However, as the written tasks generally involved little or no oral interaction in L2, they were not included in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1: Activities involving L2 interaction most and least enjoyed

Activity	Primary groups		Secondary groups	
	Most	Least	Most	Least
Games/competitive tasks with rewards	√		√	
Acting out plays	√			
Role plays	√			
Group reading of story	√		N/A*	N/A*
Teacher-directed practice drills	√			
Viewing/listening and responding tasks			√	
Partner work to make up own dialogues			√	
Visit to restaurant			√	
Responding to teacher questions		√		√
Reading out aloud		√		√
Having to speak/perform in front of class		√		√
Whole class activities		√		
Activities involving repetition		√		
Oral interviews (as tests)	N/A*	N/A*		√

* This type of activity is not common in this context.

Apart from a shared liking for games of all sorts, primary and secondary learners differed in the activities they most enjoyed but tended to agree about those that they least enjoyed. Primary learners showed a greater preference for activities involving oral performance and secondary learners preferred activities that concentrated on receptive skills, especially comprehension and/or construction of texts with a partner. These differences are consistent with the different ages of the two groups, as fifteen year old secondary learners are generally more self-conscious and inhibited than eleven year olds.

The activities that students from both class groups enjoyed least were those that required them to speak in front of the class in L2 in more formal teacher-fronted situations, even if this only involved reading aloud. This reflects the challenging nature of this type of face-

to-face communication (even in very structured contexts) where students have to operate in real time, have limited linguistic resources to draw on and therefore are always faced with the possibility of not knowing what to say or expressing themselves clumsily or incorrectly. The views of learners from the primary and secondary class groups about these activities are now discussed in greater detail.

Despite the difference in age between the students in the primary and secondary groups interviewed, language games were the L2 interaction activities that both groups most frequently nominated as enjoying. The games mentioned included very simple games such as bingo, to more elaborate games that involved the manipulation of elements of grammar. The games several secondary groups described were competitive and usually involved teams vying against each other. Students from the Orania Secondary group particularly liked the competitive games when there was a reward for the winners at the end.

Games that were enjoyed by students from one primary school class groups were not always liked by students from another primary group. For example, whole class activities involving repetition like group reading of a text or drill with flash cards were considered enjoyable by learners from the Pittosporum Primary class group. However, several of the older and more mature students from the Hibbertia Primary class group indicated their dislike for these activities.

As indicated above, the views of students from the primary and secondary class groups about activities that involved performing in front of their peers differed. Most of the students in the primary groups revealed an enthusiasm for role play and activities that involved performing skits in front of the class that was not shared by their secondary counterparts. Secondary students preferred tasks that placed more emphasis on viewing and listening, as well as entailing some oral response – for example, watching video excerpts or doing computer-based activities. Some also liked partner work which involved "making up our own dialogues." When pressed to explain why they enjoyed this activity, the student from Eremophila Secondary offered the following comment:

> When you're working with your partner, you don't care about being silly… Like *(laughter from the other students)* when you say the wrong thing, or like you try to make up a word of your own that you think is in French and like, you just have fun with your partner. You don't have to be so serious.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

Having to perform in front of the class seemed to cause considerable angst for secondary learners. They reported that such activities made them feel very nervous and they dreaded the possibility of appearing silly or stupid in front of peers or others in the class laughing at their mistakes. Older students were also more keenly aware of their very limited capacity for self-expression in L2 as compared with L1. A student from the Acanthus Secondary group observed that, "You're not comfortable talking in Italian, 'cos you don't know as many words." Another felt that speaking or performing publicly "makes your Italian look badder because you're nervous and you can't work out what to say."

Like the adult foreign language learners studied by Tse (2000), students from both primary and secondary class groups interviewed agreed that the type of interaction in L2 they least enjoyed involved having to speak in front of their peers as part of teacher-fronted interaction. Fear of not completing the task correctly and anxiety about being laughed at by peers were the main reasons given for minimal enjoyment of these activities. Responding to questions put by the teacher was mentioned by students from both groups, with primary learners disliking having to say words that they found hard to pronounce and being asked questions that were difficult and to which they did not know the answer. Being corrected by the teacher in front of others made this type of activity one secondary learners least enjoyed.

Students from two of the secondary class groups also included oral interview tests as activities that they enjoyed least, especially because of the way they were conducted:

> We get asked some questions. We have to do all of them and then they pick some. Just randomly. Then we have to answer them. 'Cos you're just sitting there and they're marking you and you don't know if you're saying the right thing.
>
> *(Eremophila* Secondary)

However, not all the students from Eremophila Secondary disliked the oral exams, even though they were universally considered stressful. For one student, the challenge and the fact that she could prepare herself by practising with a partner beforehand made them interesting, even if, as her fellow student observed, the result was somewhat stilted:

> *Std 1:* I like it. It's alright for Orals.   It's not like bad; it's really just really nerve wracking.   It's not just boring. It doesn't discourage you. For the oral assessment we have in class, we actually get to practice with our partner first, then if your partner's quite a good friend, you've been actually asked before, so it's not weird or anything.
>
> *Std 2:* Yeah, you sound [a little bit forced].
>
> <div align="right">*(Eremophila Secondary)*</div>

Being prepared in advance did not take the stress out of oral tests for the following student from Danthonia Secondary, who emphasised that in spoken exchanges the speaker just had to make do with the linguistic resources at his or her disposal:

> Oral exams. Although you have everything prepared, when you go there you think, oh, if I get it wrong I lose marks, so you just sit down and you've got to think and sometimes you're not prepared for it.   Like it's different with writing, because writing you can write it down and think I know the answer then memorise it ahead. But usually, you've got to think of word that you've heard. It's quite hard.
>
> <div align="right">*(Danthonia Secondary)*</div>

Students from two of the secondary groups who had been to a restaurant as part of their LOTE course indicated they enjoyed this kind of activity. Two students from Sassafras Secondary reported difficulties understanding "when he [the waiter] was reading out the food [from the menu]." However, they were not obliged to make any particular effort to find out what they could eat because "Then he read it out in English, so it was all right."

9.6 How particular activities contribute to learning

Learners' perceptions about ways in which teacher-fronted and peer activities contribute to their learning are presented in this section. The comments were elicited during the second student interview[8], following viewing of brief video clips of activities from two of the five lessons observed by the researcher, as per the adaptation of the technique of

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[8] A second interview was not conducted with the class group from Correa Primary; therefore, the views of the students from this class are not reflected in the discussion.

stimulated recall developed by Mackey, Gass and McDonough (2000)[9]. The activities from which the video segments were drawn are described in Table 9.2 and are the same as those shown to the teachers during their interviews.

Students reported that the activities involving teacher-fronted interaction contributed to their learning because they:

- prepared them for the topic being dealt with and helped them to focus on it;
- developed their comprehension of L2;
- offered explicit correction and explanation of mistakes;
- provided opportunity for pronunciation practice and development of fluency; and,
- suited their learning style.

Each of these reasons is further explained and illustrated with comments from learners.

Both primary and secondary groups thought that teacher-fronted activities (especially warm-up activities at the beginning of a lesson) helped their learning. The activities assisted them to tune in to the particular topic covered in L2. A primary learner said that such activities "warmed up her brain" and a secondary learner indicated that they helped to focus on the topic introduced. Learners from Acanthus Secondary stressed the importance of this type of interaction at the beginning of the lesson, possibly because their teacher usually began lessons this way, as their comments indicate:

> You just need something in Italian to start off the lesson. It really makes you think about what's going on.

> Plus it gives a bit of atmospheres. It's just like we're used to it now.
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

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[9] The nature of the adaptation is described in Chapter 3.

Table 9.2: Teacher-fronted and peer activities viewed by teachers and students

Class	Teacher-fronted activities	Peer activities
Correa Primary	Teacher-directed practice by students who ask each other directions using the structure *Pour aller à ~, s'il vous plaît?*	Small group work in which students practice asking each other directions using a map of a town centre.
Hibbertia Primary	T-SG (about five students) figure out a recipe in French for a Christmas sweet. The teacher uses L2 to question and explain difficult phrases and also mimes.	A small group of students prepare and perform 'The Three Bears'. The teacher helped students rehearse and took one of the roles.
Pittosporum Primary	Pattern drill requiring individuals to make up their own description of a dragon figure using *Il mio drago è + colour adjective*.	Small group work in which individual students ask each other questions about an imaginary dragon.
Wilga Primary	T-C Q/A activity where the teacher asks *Che cosa indossa X? /What is X wearing?* and individual learners reply using *X indossa + item of clothing + colour adjective/ X is wearing ~*.	Small group work involving simulated meal situation during which learners ask one another to pass items of food.
Eremophila Secondary	T-C Q/A activity where the teacher asks a student *Qu'est-ce que tu n'as pas fait pendant le weekend? /What didn't you do during the weekend?* The student replies using *Je n'ai pas+activity/ I didn't ~*.	Pair work involving a two-way information gap activity about booking into a youth hostel. Students do the activity with up to five different partners.
Orania Secondary	T-C Q/A activity practising telling the time using the 24 hour clock.	Pair work in which students receive cards containing either a statement or question about daily activities and have to find the matching question or statement.
Sassafras Secondary	T-C Q/A activity where the teacher asks *Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire pendant les vacances?/What do you like doing during the holidays?* and learners reply using *J'aime+ activity/ I like ~*.	Individual students survey other class members on their holiday preferences with the help of a set of questions prepared by the teacher.
Acanthus Secondary	T-C Q/A activity where the teacher asks *Che cosa mangi per la prima colazione?/What do you eat for breakfast?* Learners reply using the structure, *Mangio+ food/ I eat ~*.	Small group work in which five or six learners make a dessert using a recipe that has been the focus of their language study for several lessons. Interaction during this activity is supposed to be in L2.
Danthonia Secondary	T-C Q/A activity where the teacher quizzes learners about the introduction to a new chapter they had read.	Pair work in which learners make up their own dialogue about booking a hotel, with the support of a model dialogue.
Nardoo Secondary	T-C Q/A activity where the teacher asks learners to read out their diary entry, comments on and asks questions about it.	Pair work in which learners complete a multiple choice survey activity from their text book.

Several students from Acanthus Secondary thought activities involving teacher-fronted interaction helped with the development of L2 comprehension because they exposed them to different accents and the different ways in which others spoke L2. For students from two other secondary groups, these activities encouraged them to try and get the general drift of a conversation and to work things out. A student from another secondary class group asserted that teacher-fronted interaction assisted her to be able to respond in L2 without teacher support. Repeated re-reading of a text by the teacher helped a learner from one of the primary groups to understand the message of the text:

> I think I learned quite well because she kept reading it and then finally I understood what it meant. And then you remembered it and you could learn it.
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

Both primary and secondary students regarded teacher-fronted interaction as helpful because of the explicit correction and explanation of mistakes provided by the teacher. For secondary students, teacher-fronted interaction also offered the opportunity for practice of pronunciation and for the development of fluency. Some students simply found that teacher-fronted activities suited their learning style better than peer activities, as was the case with the following primary learner:

> I find that I remember how to say things when the teacher is up the front, actually working with the class, rather than when you're doing your own work sheets. I don't know why but that's how I learn.
> *(Hibbertia Primary)*

Teacher-fronted activities that consisted mainly of drill and repetition or that involved uninteresting, unchallenging or unrealistic topics were considered unhelpful by several primary and secondary students. For example, the topic of *Dragons* was criticised by a primary student because he considered the language associated with it would not be very useful when communicating in the TL country.

The supportive context of peer interaction was identified as helpful to learning by both primary and secondary students in this study and is consistent with the views of EFL learners studied by Garrett and Shortall (2002). Secondary students drew attention to the benefits of working with someone else and the opportunities to pool knowledge and help

each other out that this provided, especially with new or unfamiliar work. Primary students also highlighted these aspects of pair and group work as being helpful to learning. Some also appreciated the opportunity to interact more naturally:

> *Std 1:* I think this is easy because you're actually interacting with other people and using the stuff, instead of reading it off the card and saying if over and over again because it gets boring.

> *Std 2:* I think that that kind of stuff is fun to learn, because if it's fun you remember it and it's like really good because you can get to actually like talk and really use the stuff and not just say stuff.
>
> *(Wilga Primary)*

Or, as a student from Pittosporum Primary observed, pair and group work helped learning because "…if you went over there [Italy] you can speak normal Italian".

Peer activities were also recognised as contributing to learning by students from several of the secondary groups because they provided opportunities for practice, to use known language to say something new and facilitated memorisation of new language items. A student from Orania Secondary who had studied the L2 for a shorter period of time than the rest of the class reported that the simple one-way information task had filled a gap in her knowledge. Learners from Acanthus Secondary stressed the importance of peer activities that focused on aspects of the target language culture, asserting that there was more than just speaking to second language learning.

Despite their averred preference for peer activities, secondary learners, in particular, pointed to features of partner and small group work that they felt did not help their learning. Peers were limited in the kind of feedback and help they could provide.

> Its [pair work] all right but it's difficult if you don't know what you're talking about, unless the teacher is there to help.
>
> *(Acanthus Secondary)*

A student from Eremophila Secondary noted that her fellow students could not extend her linguistically in the way the teacher did and that she learned nothing new from interacting with them. A student from another class group expressed a similar sentiment about the survey activity in which she participated, saying that it did not add to her learning. More

capable learners were more likely to consider they were just going over familiar material in peer activities:

> …you only learn something that's there [related to the topic of the activity], not something you really want to learn.
>
> *(Orania Secondary)*

Several learners from Wilga Primary commented on aspects of peer activities that were not helpful to learning such as partners who misbehaved, did not stay on task or who laughed or made fun of others. The negative effect of partners who made little effort to engage with the task or stay on-task and/or who misbehaved were also mentioned by students from Orania, Nardoo and Danthonia Secondary. Poor behaviour and lack of engagement are not usually issues in adult second language classes but may occur in primary and secondary school classes and provide challenges for both teachers and students in peer activities. Compulsory participation and lack of clear purposes and goals for learning a LOTE on the part of individual learners are factors that may have contributed to the emergence of these issues in the primary and secondary school classes studied.

9.7 Summary and discussion

This chapter addressed research question four, focusing on learners' perceptions of interaction and its role in their learning. The chapter also reported on aspects of research question three by providing insights into the contexts and tasks that learners believed facilitated their language production.

The interviews with learners revealed that most learners used L2 in the classroom for interpersonal interaction and restricted their use of it to activities directed or set by the teacher. A few reported using L2 for intrapersonal, social or playful purposes. Most learners reported that they found using L2 hard and felt they had insufficient knowledge of how to "put things together" to be able to use L2 in a more spontaneous way with the teacher (to initiate questions, for example) or with each other in group or partner activities. Several learners reported feeling constrained in their L2 use in their interaction with their teacher. Learners indicated they used a range of strategies for dealing with breakdowns in

communication with the teacher or peers. Reverting to L1 appeared to be the principal strategy in both situations; however, learners' comments indicated they were more likely to try a number of different strategies before using L1 when interacting with the teacher.

The majority of learners reported that they felt most encouraged to use L2 during peer interaction because they usually worked with friends who supported and encouraged them. Most also felt that these features contributed to their learning. In addition, both primary and secondary learners cited factors related to integrative and instrumental motivation as encouraging their use of L2. Although learners did not feel as encouraged to use L2 in teacher-learner interaction as in peer interaction, they recognised that teacher-learner interaction contributed to their learning in a number of ways. Teacher feedback which assisted and supported their attempts to use L2 was considered to be particularly important.

A number of fears discouraged learners from using L2: fear of making mistakes and the related fear of embarrassment and discomfort at seeming stupid in front of peers and being laughed at; fear of not knowing or not knowing enough; and, fear of not feeling confident. Perhaps because of these fears, both primary and secondary learners identified games as being the activity requiring interaction in L2 that they most enjoyed. Apart from games, the two groups differed with regard to other specific activities they most enjoyed, with the primary learners showing a greater preference for activities involving oral performance and secondary learners preferring those that consisted of comprehension and construction of texts with partners. Notably, these activities involved peer rather than teacher-learner interaction. Having to speak in front of their peers as part of teacher-learner interaction was the activity that both primary and secondary learners least enjoyed, mainly because they felt under scrutiny from both the teacher and their peers and were worried about making mistakes or not performing adequately.

As indicated in the discussion above, many of the learners' perceptions of interaction reflect similar findings in the literature and are also consistent with the findings about interaction from the classroom observation component of this research. The fact that

learners in this study, like those in other studies, expressed a strong preference for activities involving peer interaction over teacher-fronted interaction and identified a number of ways in which they felt this helped their learning has clear implications for pedagogy. At the same time, the more thoughtful students recognised some of the shortcomings of peer interaction in terms of learning, namely the limited capacity of peers to provide feedback and the tendency to default to L1. Learners also identified features of teacher-learner interaction that encouraged and assisted their learning such as the teacher's capacity to provide input and corrective feedback and to scaffold and support their learning. Comments from learners that they were more likely to try a range of strategies to overcome communication difficulties in teacher-fronted than peer interaction highlight two points that it may be useful to explore. Firstly, teacher-fronted activities[10] may be a more effective site than peer activities for developing beginning students' capacities to deal with tasks with a communicative orientation. This is because the teacher has the language skills and pedagogic techniques to support and scaffold students' attempts to interact L2 in this way. The teacher can also make the processes involved in the development of these skills explicit and supply the required language components when these are missing. Teacher-fronted interaction involving the whole class may not be the ideal milieu for doing this, given students' dislike of being in the spotlight during the process of interaction and the potential loss of face for students when they cannot respond appropriately or at all. Some of these negative aspects can be minimised if the teacher undertakes these activities with smaller groups of students. Secondly, the lesson observation data as well as student and teacher interviews indicate that students use negotiation moves in L1. Perhaps more effort is needed to make students aware of their use of these strategies in L1 so they can transfer them to L2.

Several intriguing, if possibly predictable findings to emerge from the interviews were students' strong views about how hard they found interaction in L2 and the way in which they saw themselves as having largely a reactive rather than a proactive role in this interaction. Proficiency is obviously an important factor in beginning learners' capacity and willingness to interact in L2 and their perception of the difficulty of the enterprise.

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[10] Especially those where the teacher interacts with an individual or a small group of learners.

However, teacher beliefs, expectations and their practice may also be factors that limit learners' development in this area. Both primary and secondary teachers in this study expressed the view that their learners were unlikely to be able to deal with communication breakdowns by negotiating for meaning in L2, given their limited level of proficiency. Moreover, the secondary teachers indicated that they concentrated on the development of these skills in Years 11 and 12, when a greater time allocation and learner commitment to the study of their L2 meant proficiency levels often improved considerably.

Finally, similarities and differences in learner and teacher perceptions of interaction need to be considered. The interview data showed a congruence of views between teachers and learners in a number of areas. For example, teachers and learners identified similar activities and general conditions which they considered encouraged interaction in L2. Differences were more of emphasis than starkly contrasting views. For instance, learners expressed strong views about a number of areas that received little attention from teachers. Despite primary students' positive disposition towards role play, most students indicated that activities that involved an element of performance before their peers were among those least liked. Secondary students were particularly emphatic about this. However, only one secondary teacher acknowledged that role play may not suit all learners. Some learners were also insistent about how hard they perceived oral interaction in L2 to be and how they felt they lacked the skills to use what they had learned of the second language to express themselves for authentic communicative ends. Teachers, on the other hand, tended to focus on the satisfaction students experienced in being able to manipulate language for pseudo-communicative purposes, as the following teacher comment illustrates:

> I find that students get instant gratification from that [listening and speaking] and it could be something a simple as being able to answer, 'When's your birthday?' or whatever in a foreign language. But to be able to have that exchange successfully is quite a quick thing to achieve.
>
> *(Eremophila Secondary)*

As outlined in Chapter 1, the teaching of LOTE in Western Australia has been influenced by a pedagogy that is communicative in orientation and has promoted interaction as an

important aspect of learning. Many of the perceptions of interaction reported in this chapter show that learners value this pedagogy and feel it contributes to their learning. Learners especially value opportunities for interaction with peers. However, learners also find interaction in L2 challenging, difficult to sustain and do not always feel equipped to undertake it confidently. They also tend to dislike being the focus of attention when they attempt to use L2, as inevitably happens when teachers and learners interact in activities that involve the whole class. The experiences of interaction reported by learners in this study highlight the complex nature of this process and the influence of affective as well as cognitive factors on how it unfolds. They also underscore the need for further research on this topic with different learners and in different contexts.

This chapter has described how learners perceive key aspects of their learning, has explored some of the implications of these perceptions and briefly compared them with those held by teachers. The next and concluding chapter brings together this and other facets of the study and discusses their implications for theory, research and pedagogy.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

This study set out to describe the nature and pattern of interaction that occurred in ten primary and secondary LOTE classes in Western Australia, to document teachers' and learners' perceptions of this interaction and to relate practice and perceptions to SLA theory. The study drew on the "different but generally complementary theoretical perspectives" (Mackey, 2002, p.391) to interaction represented by cognitive-interactionist and sociocultural SLA theory. The study addressed four main questions:

1. What is the nature and pattern of interaction in LOTE classes?
2. How do particular patterns of interaction influence learners' language production?
3. Which contexts and tasks facilitate learner engagement in L2 interaction?
4. What are learners' and teachers' perceptions of interaction and its role in learning?

This chapter answers these questions, and considers their implications for research and pedagogy.

10.2 The nature and pattern of interaction

Interaction in the ten classes studied occurred through four main participation structures: teacher-class (T-C); teacher-small groups (T-SG); learner-teacher (L-T); and, learner-learners (L-L). However, most interaction was either T-C or L-L, with teacher-fronted interaction predominating in most of the classes. Exchanges and tasks in both T-C and L-L interaction focused mainly on management, form, and meaning. Both teacher-fronted[1] and peer interaction featured variable amounts of L2. In most of the classes more interaction occurred in L1 and/or a mixture of L1 and L2 than mainly in L2. Teachers tended to use mainly L2 in classroom management exchanges that required only simple language with which the students were very familiar (greetings, leave taking, calls for attention or silence, simple instructions) and for tasks that focused on meaning (Q/A 'conversations', brainstorms, review/discussion learner generated texts or learner

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[1] Unlike the situation in other classes, teacher-fronted interaction in the French class at Hibbertia Primary, where students were engaged in self-access tasks, occurred in L2 80% of the time. This mainly involved T-SG exchanges but included a few minutes of T-C interaction at the beginning and end of each lesson.

responses to L2 texts). More complex classroom and task management was usually conducted in L1, as were exchanges and tasks that focused on form or content such as explanation of grammar and discussion of aspects of L2 culture. Learners were most likely to use mainly L2 in functional language practice that required them to recycle known chunks of language and in communicative tasks such as surveys and information gap tasks when they could draw on well-rehearsed language and rely on the support of written text. However, they reverted to L1 to resolve communication difficulties, for task management and interpersonal exchanges. Communicative tasks such as joint construction of texts that involved collaborative dialogue were conducted mainly in L1. The underlying discourse structure of much teacher-fronted interaction was the Initiation – Response – Feedback (IRF) pattern. This was often the restricted version (IRF1) which is limited to three turns but also included expanded version (IRF2) where the third turn required or provided an opportunity for the learner to respond that often led to further interaction.

In teacher-learner interaction[2], teachers used a range of feedback and interactional routines, with positive evidence and routines such as non-corrective repetition featuring prominently. Teachers also provided negative feedback and tended to use implicit and explicit forms of feedback in almost equal measure. Recasts provided in isolation and clarification requests were the types of implicit negative feedback most commonly given. Explicit negative feedback was usually given as overt correction and sometimes included metalinguistic comment in L1. Negative feedback, especially of the implicit kind, was most likely to be used in interaction that occurred through tasks that focused on meaning such as Q/A conversation and reviews of learner generated texts.

An interesting finding of this study was the relationship between the types of feedback and the IRF2 discourse structure. Negative feedback such as negotiation moves and requests for reformulation were associated with the IRF2 structure, as were the simple form of positive evidence and elicitation involving strategic pausing. In contrast, the other interactional routines (the questioning form of elicitation, non-corrective repetition,

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[2] Analysis focused on teacher-learner interaction conducted mainly in L2 or a mixture of L1 and L2.

drilling and reinforcement) were associated with the IRF1 discourse structure. Some types of negative feedback (recasts, overt correction) and positive evidence (translation, completion) also tended to be associated with the IRF1 structure.

The interactional features of learner-learner interaction depended to a considerable extent on the nature of the activity or task. Functional language practice that consisted of Q/A drills, surveys and role plays based on written models was carried out mainly in L2, but generally did not demand interactional moves from participants. However, instances of learners providing each other with negative feedback in the form of recasts, clarification and confirmation checks, overt correction and elicitation involving strategic pausing were found in the performance of activities such as role plays and surveys, as well as in focused communicative tasks such as information gap tasks. This is somewhat at odds with research suggesting that the structure of two-way information gap tasks is more likely to stimulate negotiated interaction (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun, 1993). A possible explanation may be that both functional language practice activities and focused communicative tasks included written models of support for learners. Thus, when the two-way information gap tasks generated linguistic or communication difficulties for learners, they could draw on the written support or revert to L1. Focused communicative tasks involving joint construction of text were carried out mainly in L1 but included LREs where learners questioned each other or engaged metatalk about L2, usually focusing on lexis or form.

Patterns found in teacher-learner interaction include a two-part sequence pattern associated with the IRF1 discourse structure and nine[3] three-part sequence patterns which were associated with the IRF2 structure. In several classes the two-part sequence pattern was the main pattern of interaction, while in the others a number of three-part sequence patterns co-occurred with the two-part sequence pattern. Three-part sequence patterns 1 and 3 (where teacher feedback consisted of positive evidence) and 6 (where teacher feedback consisted of NF) were those most evident in teacher-learner interaction in both the primary and secondary classes. A 'scaffolding' pattern, where teachers used L2 to

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[3] Eight were those identified by Oliver (2000).

develop learners' understanding of an L2 text expressed in L1 was also a feature of teacher-learner interaction in several of the classes.

The picture of interaction in the LOTE classes studied revealed by this study raises a number of issues and questions. These include the impact of the considerable use of L1 as well as L2 in most aspects of interaction, the extent to which interaction involved features identified by SLA research as facilitating learning and the influence of activities and tasks employed on the nature of the interaction that occurred.

10.2.1 Teachers' and learners' language choices

Input in L2 is an undisputed prerequisite for second language learning. A key issue raised by this study of interaction in Western Australian LOTE classes is the nature of the input available to learners because of language choices by teachers which resulted in restricted and/or very limited use of L2. Relatively low levels of L2 use by teachers in LOTE classes would not come as a surprise to Australian LOTE teachers and appears to be characteristic of LOTE classes in primary and secondary schools across a number of different continents (Calman & Daniel, 1998; Crawford, 2002; Franklin, 1990; Kim & Elder, 2005; Macaro, 1997; Mitchell, 1988; Mitchell & Martin, 1997; Turnbull, 2001; Turnbull & Arnett 2002). Additionally, this study, like those by Kim and Elder (2005) and Hall (2004), suggests that the quality of L2 input learners receive is also restricted in nature as much of it comes in the form of interactional routines involving non-corrective repetition and reinforcement. While limited teacher proficiency may be a factor that constrains use of L2 by some teachers, those studied by Kim and Elder (2005) and Polio and Duff (1994) were all native speakers, but still restricted their use of L2, as did the several native/near native speakers among the teachers in this study.

Several studies point to a possible role for L1 in learners' L2 development. For example, Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) suggest that strategies involving the use of L1 such as translating L2 words into L1 and making contrasts between L1 and L2 forms may facilitate acquisition. Turnbull and Arnett (2002) cite evidence that code-switching can enhance input by making linguistic items more salient and thus making learners aware of

existing knowledge. Nevertheless, it is also acknowledged that this feature of LOTE classroom interaction tends to restrict the quantity of L2 input available to learners[4].

The teacher interview data from this study point to social and regulatory functions for L1 use by teachers that may help explain the extent of its use. All teachers understood the need to maximise L2 use to promote language development. However, they often found this difficult to do and identified social and affective obstacles to achieving this goal. Teachers who were non-native speakers did not identify their level of proficiency as an issue. The chief concerns of the teacher group as a whole seemed to be that students would not understand them when they spoke L2 and become confused and alienated and that they would 'lose' them – that is, students would find learning too difficult, become frustrated and/or unmotivated and possibly difficult to manage. Thus, like the university teachers studied by Polio and Duff (1994), they put high value on establishing rapport with students and creating a comfortable and enjoyable classroom atmosphere and used L1 for this purpose. However, by consistently dealing with communication difficulties in L1, they may be limiting opportunities for learning. Interestingly, a study by Levine (2003) involving university foreign language learners suggested that teachers in this context tended to overestimate students' anxiety and resistance to the teacher's use of L2.

The use of L1 by second language learners is part of their interlanguage development and therefore has different implications than its use by teachers. This study, like other studies (Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Brooks, Donato & McGlone, 1997; Platt & Brooks, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003) demonstrated that learners employ L1 to support and scaffold each others' L2 use and to explore and develop their understanding of L2 grammar. Evidence suggests that such use of L1 can contribute in a positive way to learners' language development. The use of L1 in peer interaction by the learners in this study appeared to be influenced by their low proficiency and the fact that they shared a common language. Storch and Wigglesworth (2003), on the other hand, found that intermediate level adult ESL learners made minimal use of L1 in peer

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[4] Classroom learners may also have access to sources of L2 input other than the teacher, especially given the advent of ICT. Nevertheless, the teacher remains a crucial source of this input

interaction and pointed to the influence of contextual and individual factors to explain this. The issue with L1 use in peer-interaction is not so much that it occurs, but how often it occurs, when it is likely to be most beneficial for learners and how to best to utilise it to support their L2 development. Wells (1999), responding to the study by Antón & DiCamilla (1998), highlighted the need for principled use and for balance in the use of the two codes to ensure maximum benefit for learners. Cook (2001) and Macaro (2002) have suggested that this may also be the key issue for L1 use in teacher-learner interaction. There is, however, a lack of knowledge about what this balance should be, especially at particular stages of learner proficiency. Clearly, further research is needed on this topic for both teacher-learner and peer interaction.

10.2.2 Interaction that facilitates learning

Both cognitive interactionist and sociocultural theories of interaction are concerned with identifying the key elements of the interaction process that facilitate learning. A number of empirical studies based on the revised Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) has produced evidence of the role of implicit forms of negative feedback (recasts, clarification requests, confirmation and comprehension checks) in facilitating learning, both as a source of comprehensible input and as a way of stimulating learners to notice nontargetlike features of their L2 utterances and thus create opportunities for modification of output. Explicit forms of negative feedback provided during interaction such as overt correction, metalinguistic explanations and requests for reformulation have also been shown to facilitate learning.

The findings of this study indicate that both teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction included implicit and explicit negative feedback, particularly in instructional areas that were meaning-focused. However, teacher-learner interaction, especially where it involved meaning-focused activities such as Q/A 'conversations', brainstorming and reviews of student generated texts, was a more consistent source of the various forms of negative feedback than learner-learner interaction. A likely reason for this appeared to be learners' low level of proficiency and their consequent reliance on L1 when they encountered linguistic or communication difficulties. Another possible reason was the proportion of

learner-learner interaction that involved functional language practice rather than-focused communicative tasks such as information-gap tasks and surveys, whose structure tends to generate more interactional moves. Yet another possible reason is the high level of written support given to learners when performing the focused communicative tasks in question, which tends to blur the distinction between these tasks and functional language practice. Some student pairs clearly required this high level of support to facilitate their language production and reduce frustration in performance of the task. For other student pairs, the support appeared to make an information gap task more like a substitution exercise, with students completing the task without any need to go beyond the linguistic repertoire provided for them, as in the following excerpt:

> *Excerpt 1*
> 1. *Std 2:* Est-ce qu'il y a [cuisine]
>   *Is there kitchen?*
>
> 2. *Std 1:* C'est au premier étage.
>   *It's on the first floor.*
>
> 3. *Std 2:* Merci... C'est ouvert quand?
>   *Thanks. When is it open?*
>
> 4. *Std 1:* C'est ouvré à sept, sept heures à vingt et un heures.
>   *It's opened at 7.00, 7.00 am to 9.00 pm.*
>
> 5. *Std 2:* OK. -.Merci.
>   *(Eremophila Secondary)*

The next excerpt, where the teacher partners a student in the same information gap task, offers an interesting contrast and illustrates the advantages of NS-NNS interaction. In this exchange, the teacher uses simple moves such as restatement of the question (turns 1 and 5), recast (turn 3) and non corrective repetition (turn 5) to ensure the student understands the request she is making and to help the student respond:

> *Excerpt 2*
> 1. *T:* Excusez- moi, est-ce qu'l y a des dortoirs pour les femmes? *(std doesn't seem to understand)* - des dortoirs *(gives a chuckle)* - des dortoirs pour les femmes?
>   *Excuse me, are there female dormitories here? Dormitories – female dormitories?*

2. *Std:* Deuxième étage.
   Second floor.

3. *T:* Au deuxième étage? D'accord. Et est-ce qu'il y a une salle de bains près des dortoirs?
   On the second floor? Good. And is there a bathroom near the dormitories?

4. *Std:* - Er - oui. *(Appreciative laughter from class.)* Salle de bains près des dortoirs.
   Er – yes. Bathroom near the dormitories.

5. *T:* Oh, près des dortoirs! C'est parfait. Est-ce que ça c'est toujours ouvert? La salle de bains est toujours ouverte?
   Oh, near the dormitories! That's perfect. And it is always open? The bathroom, is it always open?

6. *Std:* Non. *(Appreciative laughter from class.)* Um – salle - est ouverte – entre -sept heures –
   No. Um – bathroom open between 7.00 am …

   (Eremophila Secondary)

Teacher input consisting of positive evidence and interactional routines such as elicitation, non-corrective repetition, drilling and reinforcement also featured extensively in teacher-learner interaction, in particular. Interactional routines such as non-corrective repetition, drilling and reinforcement were associated with the restricted IRF1 discourse structure with its two-part structure pattern of interaction. However, use of positive evidence by the teacher in teacher-learner interaction was associated with the expanded IRF2 discourse structure and the three-part pattern of interaction. It use often led to a cycle of interaction which provided learners with additional comprehensible input and potential opportunities for negotiated interaction. This study, like that of Iwashita (2003), therefore suggests a facilitative role for positive evidence in interaction involving low proficiency LOTE learners. Similarly, the interactional routine of elicitation (strategic pausing) was associated with the IRF2 structure and, as found by Lyster and Ranta (1997), was effective in stimulating the learner to repair nontargetlike utterances and/or expand on an utterance.

This inter-relationship between the various types of feedback and interactional routines suggests that the distinction made by Chaudron (1988)[5] between 'interaction' involving

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[5] And other researchers with a cognitive interactionist theoretical perspective.

negotiation for meaning and 'interaction' in the more general sense may not be tenable in discourse in school LOTE classes, as argued by Breen (2001) for second language classroom interaction in general. This issue has also been explored by van Lier (2000), who argued for the need to develop an ecological approach to learning which considers interaction in its totality, rather than privileging the contribution to learning of one type of interaction. van Lier proposes that different types interactional activities offer the learner different opportunities for learning that are all potentially valuable. Thus, a communication gap task between a NS and NNS, because of its structure, tends to produce more negotiation for meaning than relatively open-ended conversational interaction between two learners. However, as Nakahama, Tyler and van Lier (2001) have shown, conversational interaction gives learners more opportunities to produce complex utterances than communication gap tasks and also tends to provide a context for the use of pragmatic knowledge. Learners also perceived themselves to be more challenged in conversational interaction than during a communication gap task.

Research based on sociolinguistic theories of SLA emphasises the social nature of learning and has provided evidence for the interactional benefits of assisted performance involving processes such as scaffolding, collaborative dialogue and learner agency (Lantolf 2000; Swain, 1998, 2000; Ohta, 2000, 2001). These processes were evident in both teacher-learner and peer interaction. Feedback such as the three forms of positive evidence (simple, translation, completion) function very much to scaffold learners' participation in teacher-learner exchanges, as do the various forms of elicitation.

Collaborative dialogue has usually been examined in the context of learner-learner interaction. Interestingly, the scaffolding pattern of interaction found in some teacher-learner interaction in this study seemed to function as collaborative dialogue. The teacher used L2 to guide the learner towards comprehension of L2 texts, while learners checked their understanding by restating the information provided by the teacher in L1. In this study, collaborative dialogue between peers was carried out mainly in L1, probably because of learners' limited proficiency levels. Analysis of the kinds of LREs generated

by learners during pair and/or group work indicated that they used L1 to understand L2 vocabulary and aspects of L2 form and to support each other in their learning.

10.3 Influence of patterns of interaction on learners' language production

The production of L2 by learners involved in this study tended to be limited and drew heavily on well-rehearsed language. The influence of patterns of interaction on learners' language production was judged in terms of learner participation and modification of output by learners. The underlying two-part sequence pattern of the IRF1 discourse structure and associated interactional routines used by the teacher circumscribed opportunities for learner participation as these routines (the questioning form of elicitation, non-corrective feedback, drilling and reinforcement) either required only a display-type of response or closed the interactional sequence.

In contrast, the underlying three-part sequence pattern of the IRF2 discourse structure promoted learner participation by requiring or encouraging the learner to respond to the teacher's initial feedback. Depending on the nature of the feedback, the learners might also have an opportunity to modify their output. Feedback consisting of simple positive evidence or elicitation involving strategic pausing promoted participation by giving learners the opportunity to continue an exchange, without necessarily requiring modified output. In contrast, negative feedback, especially interactional moves and requests for reformulation both promoted participation by implicitly or explicitly pointing to the need for learners to modify their output. Teacher use of elicitation consisting of strategic pausing, positive evidence and NF often resulted in a cycle of interaction which further extended learner participation and created additional opportunities for the production of modified output by the learner. The 'scaffolding' pattern used by some teachers also promoted learner participation by using L2 to interpret learners' L1 responses to L2 texts and thus make these texts more comprehensible to them.

The extended interaction between the teacher and individual learner that occurs within the IRF2 discourse structure is important in the LOTE classroom for the increased input and the potential opportunities for modified output it makes available to the learner. The

teacher's need to involve and engage all class members may constrain willingness to undertake this extended interaction with one learner when the teacher is working with the whole class. However, the finding by Ohta (2001) that learners not directly involved in interaction may still actively participate as auditors or overhearers suggests that judicious and skilled use of such interaction may benefit all learners. Data from teacher-learner interaction with small groups of students, rather than the whole class, suggest that this participation structure may be the most fruitful context for extended interaction between the teacher and an individual learner as it offers the greatest potential for maximum involvement by all learners.

Key influences on language production in learner-learner interaction were task, and language choice. Functional language practice activities and focused communicative tasks, except joint construction of text, promoted participation through use of L2. However, the interaction generally involved the manipulation of well rehearsed chunks of language and offered few opportunities for learners to give each other the type of feedback that might stimulate modified output, as illustrated in excerpt 1 above. Focused communicative tasks such as joint construction of texts occurred mainly in L1 but featured interaction where learners made requests to each other about language, engaged in metatalk, initiated requests to the teacher about language or corrected each other. Thus, L1 was used by students to focus on and attempt to solve linguistic problems, with learners producing LREs about lexis and form. This interaction in L1 appeared to promote awareness of particular linguistic features and may have contributed to learners' language development, as suggested by Antón and DiCamilla (1998) and Swain and Lapkin (2000).

10.4 Contexts and tasks that facilitate learner engagement in L2 interaction
Evidence related to this question was provided by three sources: lesson transcripts and teacher and student perceptions. Exchanges and tasks were classified according to four focus areas or contexts: management; form; meaning; and, content for both T-C and L-L interaction. In T-C interaction 'meaning–focused' tasks such as Q/A 'conversations',

brainstorms and reviews of student-generated texts appeared to most facilitate learner engagement in L2 interaction. However, exchanges were almost always teacher initiated.

In peer interaction, form–focused functional language practice activities such as 'Q/A rehearsing L2 form', role plays based on model dialogues and some focused communicative tasks such as information-gap tasks and surveys seemed to result the greatest amount of interaction in L2. However, functional language practice activities principally required learners to reproduce pre-fabricated chunks of L2 rather formulate their own language in order to exchange information with their partner. Learners also relied very heavily on written models to carry out the focused communicative tasks. This seemed to neutralise the features of these tasks which promote negotiated interaction and made L2 use by learners in these tasks very similar to that occurring during functional language practice. On the one hand, this tends to support the view of Batstone (2002) that, for beginning learners, a more restricted 'learning' context that makes predictable linguistic and social demands on learners may more effectively promote learner engagement than one where tasks are more genuinely meaning-focused or communicative. On the other hand, it raises questions about the quality of that engagement, the extent of its impact on learning and the mechanisms needed to help learners move from the restricted 'learning' environment to the meaning-focused more 'real-life' environment.

The focus areas of 'management' and 'content' did not tend to facilitate a great deal of interaction in L2 in either T-C interaction or L-L interaction. The opportunities for student to interact in L2 in the management context in T-C interactions were limited - for several reasons. Firstly, use of L1 by the teacher tended to be the norm, except for the simplest of classroom and task management situations such as greetings, leave takings, the provision of praise and reinforcement, where familiar, formulaic language could be used. In addition to this, T-C interaction related to 'management' tended, by nature, to be unidirectional because instructions and directives from the teacher required the learner to act rather than give a verbal response. The presentation and discussion of L2 culture by the teacher tended to be the main area of content covered in conventional LOTE classes and this usually occurred in L1. In peer interaction learners generally managed tasks and

interpersonal issues in L1, mainly because of their limited proficiency. However, the interviews indicated that students also simply found it easier to use L1 and did so even when they may have been able to interact in L2.

The students interviewed identified tasks that were not too hard, but at the same time stimulating and authentic as those that facilitated interaction. Students expressed a preference for peer interaction over teacher-learner interaction. However, most felt they did not have the linguistic skills for sustained L2 use in more communicatively oriented tasks and therefore relied heavily on L1, especially if difficulties arose. In teacher-learner interaction, students considered the nature of teacher feedback, especially a willingness to repeat and explain language that was not immediately understood, together with the provision of wait time as important factors in facilitating their capacity to interact in L2. Secondary learners, in particular, disliked tasks that required them to perform in L2 before the rest of the class.

10.5 Teachers' and learners' perceptions of interaction

The perceptions of interaction of the teachers and learners involved in this study appeared to be consistent with the study's findings about the nature and pattern of interaction in the classes involved. For example, both teachers and learners considered that interaction needed to occur in L1 as well as L2 and regarded L1 as an essential support to L2 learning. However, teachers acknowledged the importance of maximising their own use of L2, but did not always find it easy to do so because of a sense that they were 'losing' the learners. Learners reported that they found engaging in interaction in L2 quite difficult and acknowledged that their level of L2 use in peer activities was not very high. They indicated that they felt they lacked the linguistic and communicative skills to express themselves for authentic communicative ends in L2 and were not confident about their capacity to do this. In particular, they did not attempt to deal with communication breakdowns in L2 as they felt they lacked the linguistic skills to do this.

Participation structures and activities that provided opportunities for teacher-directed interaction as well as those that involved peer interaction were considered important to the

language learning process by both learners and teachers. However, students almost universally expressed a preference for peer interaction over teacher-learner interaction and stressed the importance of its affective benefits (enjoyment of and feeling comfortable with engaging with the L2; support from peers; cooperating rather than competing in the learning process).

For the teachers in this study, the crucial nexus between interaction and language learning appeared to lie in the opportunities for the practice that it provided and its contribution to student motivation. This suggests underlying concepts of language learning based on the building block approach characteristic of synthetic syllabuses. Further, teachers' attempts to explain terms such as *negotiation for meaning* suggested they did not have a clear understanding of this concept. Teachers of primary classes appeared to consider it was of little relevance given their learners' very early stage of language development. Secondary teachers were uncertain about their learners' capacity to negotiate for meaning. Several expressed the view that this was a skill they expected learners to develop in Years 11 and 12.

10.6 Implications for theory, research and pedagogy

This study raises a number of issues that have theoretical and pedagogical implications. The theoretical issues are discussed first followed by those whose emphasis is on pedagogy. A theoretical issue raised by this study is the bilingual nature of the linguistic environment in LOTE classes, evidenced by the fact that both teacher-learner and peer interaction occurs in L1 as well as L2. The Interaction Hypothesis, by definition, accommodates L2 in its conceptualisation of interaction and at a cognitive level. Sociocultural SLA theory is able to include L1 as well as L2 in its construct of interaction through the concept of scaffolding, which emerges from the Vygotskyan view of learning as assisted performance. This study found that both these theoretical frameworks are useful for explaining LOTE classroom interaction and its contribution to second language learning. A tenet of bilingual education is the importance of L1 as a foundation for L2 and its ongoing role in the acquisition of L2. A theoretical perspective on interaction in

conventional LOTE classes that similarly accounts for L1 as well as L2 is needed in order to better understand and explain learning in this classroom context.

The other theoretical issue raised by this study is that of the role of context in second language learning. Debate and research on this topic have examined context from a number perspectives, three of which are discussed here. The first perspective has to do with the overall linguistic environment or context for learning. Long (1996) argued that context in this sense has no role to play in language development. However, Tarone (2000) drew on a number of research studies to demonstrate that the nature of the learner's interlanguage development does differ according to the characteristics of this broad context. The second perspective considers 'context' in terms of the orientation of tasks. Batstone (2002) examined the orientation of tasks to either 'learning' or 'communication' and argued that tasks with a communicative orientation may not serve the beginning learner well because they make it difficult for the learner to make sense of new input by attending to form. Production of output was also constrained because of the complex and face-threatening nature of communication. Batstone suggested that beginning learners are 'between contexts' and need the features of tasks with a 'learning' orientation such as repetition and pre-tasks planning to compensate for their limited language resources. Mackey and Oliver (2003) examined the various instructional contexts within the language lesson and how they influenced the provision of negative feedback in teacher-fronted interaction. Their study established that the four different lesson contexts of management, form, meaning and content affected the nature and amount of negative feedback provided and the extent to which this was utilised by learners.

The current study also draws attention to issues surrounding all three aspects of context discussed above. In terms of the broad linguistic environment, the bilingual nature of the LOTE classes examined highlights the differences between the LOTE and ESL classroom context, differences that are not always acknowledged in research studies. Aspects of this context that may impact on interaction and learning only touched on by this study, but that deserve further research attention, include the amount of time allocated for LOTE in the school curriculum, the status of LOTE as a learning area vis-à-vis other learning areas and

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the compulsory nature of LOTE learning in primary and secondary schools in Western Australia. The characteristics of tasks with a communication orientation that constrain learner engagement identified by Batstone (2002) were evident in the current study and exemplified in the extent to which learners had to be supported in carrying information-gap and survey tasks. In this study, as in the study by Mackey and Oliver (2003), the meaning-focused instructional context provided the greatest opportunity for teachers to give learners negative feedback.

A number of research and pedagogical implications follow from this study. The need to develop a principled basis for balanced L1/L2 use in the classroom by both learners and teachers was highlighted by this study and was discussed in some detail above. Other implications include the relationship between level of learner proficiency and the extent of learner capacity to engage in and benefit from interaction that involves implicit rather than explicit feedback; the possible need for more explicit training for learners to facilitate learner capacity to engage in negotiated interaction; and, teacher knowledge about interaction and the need for professional development. Each of these will be briefly discussed.

Proficiency level has been identified by a number of studies as possibly impacting on learners' capacity to engage in and to benefit from negotiated interaction (Mackey, 1999; Iwashita, 2003; Williams, 2001). The low proficiency level of learners who participated in this research appeared to influence the nature and pattern of the interaction that occurred in the classes studied. The constraints placed on learner engagement in L2 interaction by their low proficiency were apparent in the rarity of learner-initiated L2 exchanges in teacher-fronted interaction and the tendency for learners to rely heavily on L1 when communication or other difficulties arose in peer interaction. The call for further research to establish "a threshold hypothesis for a facilitative role of interactional moves – that is, the possibility of differential effects of interactional moves (particularly positive evidence) depending on the learner level" (Iwashita, 2003, p.32) is of particular relevance for ongoing study of interaction in the LOTE classroom context.

The data on peer interaction and students' perceptions of interaction collected as part of this study indicated that students perceived interacting in L2 as difficult and generally did not attempt to deal with communication breakdowns as they felt they lacked the skills to do this. This sense of difficulty and lack of confidence stems, in part, from their level of proficiency, which remains low, even after three to five years of study. However, students' comments about not feeling equipped to interact with each other in L2 and the readiness with which they defaulted to L1, even when they may have been able to operate in L2, also point to a lack strategies to deal effectively with communication difficulties in L2. It is possible, therefore, that classroom LOTE learners may need explicit training on how to deal with communication breakdowns by engaging in negotiated interaction in L2, rather than defaulting to L1. This training could include developing learners' awareness of the strategies they already use in L1 and their possible application to communication in L2.

The social factors that influence interaction such as group dynamics, power relationships between individuals of different levels of proficiency and sensitivity to a partner's interactional clues that enables a learner developmentally cue the help given the a fellow learner were highlighted by several studies discussed in the literature review (Ohta, 2000; Storch, 2002; Yule & Macdonald, 1990). The primary and secondary school learners interviewed as part of this study identified a number of social factors in peer interaction that they felt helped them with their learning. They placed a great deal of value on the support they received from their peers during pair and group activities and on the sense of solidarity derived from trying to solve the common linguistic difficulties they faced. For these learners, the importance of peer interaction lay as much in these features as in opportunities provided to interact in L2. Conversely, teacher-learner interaction, particularly in front of the whole class, creates anxiety because of the potential for error or inability to respond and the loss of face before peers associated with this. That peer activities promote interaction in L2 by helping to mitigate learners' perceptions of difficulty and lack of confidence affirms their importance in the pedagogy of the second language classroom.

The teacher interviews revealed that teacher perceptions of interaction only partly reflected developments in the field over the past twenty five years, as teachers considered the role of interaction in learning to be mainly linked to practice and were not familiar with concepts such as negotiated interaction and implicit feedback. The nature of the study does not permit precise relationships to be deduced between teachers' perceptions of interaction and the patterns of interaction and feedback observed in their classrooms. Nevertheless, there does seem to be a degree of consistency between teachers' views of interaction as predominantly concerned with practice and performance, their limited acquaintance with the concept of negotiated interaction and the nature of their interaction with learners. A review of the recent research literature on teacher-student interaction in second language learning by Hall and Walsh (2002) argued for links between the type of interaction promoted in the classroom and teacher beliefs. The teacher perceptions of interaction and their views of learning as revealed by the interviews point to a need for professional development to update and enhance teacher knowledge about the area. To maximise its effectiveness, however, this professional learning also needs to take into account research findings that indicate that teachers' views about language learning are shaped by the nature and needs of their learners and by the exigencies of the classroom context, rather than research and theory (Breen et al., 1998; Crookes, 1997).

10.7 Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study relate to the size and nature of the sample, the study's qualitative orientation and the nature of the research design. The sample of ten classes from which data was collected was small. Although it included classes from both government and non-government schools, the classes were all from schools in the metropolitan area and were not randomly selected. Moreover, while the teaching programs and approach to pedagogy in the classes studied were in many ways typical of Year 6 and 7 primary and Year 10 secondary classes, the sample did not attempt to be representative of primary and secondary schools in Western Australia. Participating teachers essentially self-selected for the study as no particular reward or inducement was offered in exchange for participation. It is possible that only teachers who were interested in the research topic and felt comfortable with and confident about being observed while teaching decided to

participate. Moreover, these teacher attributes may have influenced learners' behaviour and attitudes in positive ways. For all these reasons, it is not possible to generalise about the findings of the study beyond the particular classes and teachers involved.

The qualitative nature of the study and the broad and exploratory focus of the research design mean that its findings are necessarily at the level of insights that need to be substantiated by further research, rather than results that verify elements of a particular theoretical position. The fact that data for each class were collected from lessons as usually planned by teachers may not have produced the best data possible for learner-learner interaction, in particular, for a number of reasons. The proportion of learner-learner interaction included over the five lessons varied considerably in each of the classes, with very little learner-learner interaction featuring in several of the classes. There was also significant variation in nature of the activities and tasks used, with focused communicative tasks such as information gap tasks, surveys and Jigsaw tasks used in only five of the ten classes, four of these being classes of French. The video segments of lessons viewed as prompts for reflection on past performance in the teacher and learner interviews were useful in obtaining responses about general aspects of interaction. However, most were conducted too long after the lessons to elicit useful data about the specific features of the particular interactional episode in question.

On a technical level, access to more sophisticated audio and video equipment would have improved the quality and quantity of the data collected. In particular, audio equipment designed to provide high quality recordings of the interaction of individual learners may have provided additional data on learner-learner interaction that would have resulted in more complete answers to the research questions. Video cameras with wide angle lens may also have captured the contribution of gesture and body language to interaction – features not accessible in the video data available. Finally, the fact that the researcher had to set up and manage the equipment alone, sometimes made it difficult to concentrate on her work as an observer.

10.8 Conclusion

This study has provided a detailed description of the nature and pattern of interaction in ten primary and secondary school LOTE classes. It also explored the relationship between patterns of interaction and learners' language productions, examined the contexts and tasks that facilitate learner engagement interaction in L2 and documented teacher and learner perceptions of interaction.

The picture of interaction that emerged from the classroom observation data suggests that its central focus for both teachers and learners was mainly practice and performance. This view was confirmed by the teacher and student interview data. Low levels of learner proficiency and teacher sensitivity to this learner characteristic seem to be the reasons for this focus. Other possible reasons are teacher personal views of language learning and their limited or acquaintance with interactional research of the past twenty five years.

The study raised questions about the quantity of input and interaction that occurred in L2 in most classes, as well as aspects of its quality. The amount of teacher-learner and peer interaction occurring mainly in L2 in most of the classes was rather limited and its quality variable, with opportunities for negotiated interaction, feedback and comprehensible output constrained by tasks that often emphasised practice over communication. The study also highlighted, once again, the complexities of classroom-based research while at the same time confirming that it is needed.

The insights provided by this study point to several areas for further interaction-related research and suggest action in terms of professional development. Overall, the study has contributed to knowledge and understanding of interaction in a second language learning context that deserves greater research attention.

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APPENDIX 1: Listening and Responding and Speaking Strand Outcome Statements

Listening and Responding and Speaking	

Students comprehend and communicate in the target language through listening and respond and speaking.

The student:

FOS (Foundation Outcome Statement)	There are no Foundation Outcomes for the LOTE learning area, since Level 1 is considered to be the first level of achievement for all students.
Level 1	Listens to the target language, demonstrating understanding through non-verbal response, repetition, action or response in English.
Level 2	Listens to the target language and gives simple, formulaic responses in the target language.
Level 3	Listens to longer spoken texts in the target language and responds using predominantly well-rehearsed language.
Level 4	Listens to target language texts containing some unfamiliar language and responds demonstrating manipulation of some elements of language.
Level 5	Listens to less-predictable spoken texts and responds in a variety of ways, using a number of strategies to communicate meaning.
Level 6	Listens to a broader ranger of longer spoken texts, mostly authentic, and responds in a variety of ways.
Level 7	Listens and responds to increasingly complex texts, manipulating language in order to initiate and sustain communication within a range of contexts.
Level 8	Listens and responds in order to meet the needs of a wide range of communicative purposes.

Education Department of Western Australia (1998, p.6)

APPENDIX 2: Lesson observation field notes pro-forma

School:	Year level and language:		Lesson date:	
Lesson content	**Interaction event (s)**	**Participants**	**Nature of interaction**	**What helped or hindered?**

*The purpose of this form is to help me discover your perceptions of the interaction that took place in the LOTE lessons I observed. Please complete the form at a time convenient to you **after** each lesson and use a style of reporting you feel comfortable with e.g. dot points. I would like you to concentrate on providing information about the interaction that you remember most clearly. This might be one event or it could be a number of them. I will collect the forms from you after the fifth lesson observation.*

School:	Year level and language:		Lesson date:	
Interaction event + subject matter *(What & what about?)*	**Participants** *(Who?)*	**Nature of interaction** *(How?)*	**What, if anything, helped the interaction?**	**What, if anything, hindered the interaction?**
For example Class conversation about favourite foods Q & A about L2 reading Practice and communicative tasks involving pair work or group work Spontaneous interaction in L2 Interaction in L1 etc.	*For Example* Teacher → Student(s) Teacher→ Class Student(s) → Teacher Class→ Teacher Student(s) → Student(s) Student(s) → Visitor(s) Visitor(s) → Student(s) etc.	*For Example* Repetition Practice Clarification Confirmation Correction Communication repair Negotiation for meaning Feedback Recast etc.		

Other comments:

APPENDIX 3b: Teacher self-report pro-forma (blank)

*The purpose of this form is to help me discover your perceptions of the interaction that took place in the LOTE lessons I observed. Please complete the form at a time convenient to you **after** each lesson and use a style of reporting you feel comfortable with e.g. dot points. I would like you to concentrate on providing information about the interaction that you remember most clearly. This might be one event or it could be a number of them. I will collect the forms from you after the fifth lesson observation.*

School:	Year level and language:		Lesson date:	
Interaction event + subject matter *(What & what about?)*	**Participants** *(Who?)*	**Nature of interaction** *(How?)*	**What, if anything, helped the interaction?**	**What, if anything, hindered the interaction?**

Other comments:

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APPENDIX 4: Teacher interview stimulus questions

1. For how many years have you been teaching (all levels/areas)?

2. For how many years have you taught a LOTE in primary/secondary schools (if different)?

3. Other relevant experience (eg., curriculum writer etc).

4. Could you tell me a bit about your approach to classroom language learning –what you think/ know from experience that really helps student learning? (Encourage language specific comments, not just general comments such as 'a supportive environment' etc.)

5. Could you also tell me a bit about the learning/teaching program in the class I've been observing? What are its broad goals/outcomes? What are the specific goals for the Terms 3 and/or 4 teaching program?

6. What does 'interaction' mean for you in the context of your language classroom?

7. Let's look at a couple of examples of interaction from the lessons I've observed. I'd like you to comment on what's happening and the kind of interaction that's going on. *(Look at video clips and discuss and comment on the interaction. Who talks, with whom, who initiates, who responds, teacher and student roles, L2 use by teacher/student(s)? Also ask specific questions related to each episode viewed.*

8. Have you come across the term, 'negotiated interaction'? If yes, what does it mean for you in the context of your LOTE classroom? Are there any examples in the video segments viewed? Could you give other examples?

9. In your experience, what situations/activities are most likely to result in your students (those from the class observed, in the first instance, then students in general from the year level involved) interacting in the L2, with you or another L2 speaker or with each other?

10. Are there any other comments you'd like to make on this area?

APPENDIX 5: Student interview 1 stimulus questions (secondary)

1. Who do you talk and use French/Italian with in your French/Italian lessons? The teacher? Other students? Yourself? Tell me more about this.

2. What exchanges/activities that involve talking French/Italian with someone usually happen in your French/ Italian lessons?

3. Which language do you most often use with your teacher (for work and other reasons) in your French/Italian class? Can you explain why?

4. Please describe the kind of situations/tasks where you talk in French/Italian when interacting with your teacher in your French/Italian class?

5. What encourages you to use French/Italian in these situations/with these tasks?

6. Which language do you most often use to talk with your fellow students (for work and other reasons) in your French/Italian class? Why?

7. Please describe the kind of situations/tasks where you talk in French/Italian when interacting with your fellow students?

8. What encourages you to use French/Italian in these situations/with these tasks?

9. What kinds of exchanges/activities that involve talking in French/Italian do you most enjoy doing? Why?

10. Are there any activities that you do not like doing? Tell me what they are? Why?

11. What kinds of exchanges/activities that involve talking in French/Italian help you most with your learning? Why?

12. What kind do you think help you least with your learning? Why?

13. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about talking in French/Italian in your LOTE class?

14. Are there any other kinds of exchanges/activities that involve talking in French/Italian, that you would like to see happening in your French/Italian lessons?

15. What does the word' interaction' make you think of in your French/Italian lessons?

APPENDIX 6: Student interview 1 stimulus questions (primary)

Introductory remarks
I'm going to ask you some questions about talking in Italian/French in class and I'd like you to tell me what you think. There is no right answer. I'm interested in what everyone has to say. All of you might think the same or everyone might have different ideas. If you have something different to say from the person who spoke before you, that's OK. Don't be afraid to say what you think. Could we just have one person speaking at a time.

1. Can you tell me about who you try to talk Italian to or with in class? The teacher, your classmates, others? Tell me more about this.

2. When do you usually try to talk French/Italian in class? Any particular part of the lesson, particular activity?

3. Can you remember any of the kinds of things you try to say? Do you mainly ask questions or answer them?

4. What helps you to try to talk French/Italian in class during particular activities?

5. Is there anything that discourages or makes it hard for you to talk French/Italian in class/during these activities?

6. What kinds of activities where you have to talk Italian do you most enjoy?

7. Are there any activities you don't like doing? Which ones are they? Why?

8. What do you do when someone (your teacher, classmate or a visitor) talks to you in Italian and you don't understand?

9. Which language do you use most of the time in class? English? Italian? A mixture of both? Why?

10. Which language does your teacher use most of the time in class? English? Italian? A mixture of both? Why?

11. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about talking in Italian with other people in class?

APPENDIX 7: Letter to school principals

<div align="right">Researcher's address</div>

Title/first name/surname
Principal
Name of school
Address

Dear ~

My name is Rita Tognini and I'm currently a PhD student in Applied Linguistics at Edith Cowan University. I'm writing to you to request permission to undertake research in your school related to my Ph.D topic. The area of Applied Linguistics that I'm working in is second language acquisition, with particular reference to languages other than English (LOTE). My topic is, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions.* My proposal for research in this topic has been approved by Edith Cowan University.

I'm interested in this topic for a number of reasons. Interaction is an important aspect of second language learning theory and it's also an important feature of the approach to language teaching advocated in current curriculum documents and textbooks. However, interaction has not been studied to any extent in the LOTE primary and secondary classroom context, and certainly not in Western Australia. Hence my interest in exploring learners' interaction and the language use it leads to in these contexts. I'd also like to find out more about the perceptions teachers and learners have about this interaction.

I believe this research will provide important information about the nature and pattern of interaction of LOTE classroom learners, the contexts that facilitate this interaction and learners' and teachers' perception of it. This information will be of value to language researchers, LOTE teachers, curriculum writers and policy makers working in the LOTE area.

The questions my research will attempt to answer are:

1. What is the nature and pattern of interaction in LOTE classes?

2. What language is used in particular types of interaction?

3. What effect do the different types of interaction have on learners' language production?

4. What are the contexts that facilitate engagement in interaction?

5. How do these contexts influence interaction and language use?

In order to answer these questions, I plan to observe the interaction that occurs in Year 6 or 7 and Year 10 LOTE classes in several primary and secondary schools. The teacher in your school I would like to work with is (name of teacher). I have spoken to (name of teacher) informally to ascertain whether she would be interested in participating in this research (subject to your permission and that of the parents of the students in her class) and have received a positive response.

The research activities that will be undertaken in your school are outlined below:

1. **Before the classroom observation**
   - Meeting with the LOTE teacher to review and discuss the data collection process and to gather background information about the nature of the LOTE program for the year group involved and the specific lessons to be observed. This will be done outside class time, at a time and place convenient to the teacher.
   - Preliminary observation of a lesson in order to enable me to become familiar with the classroom layout, classroom organisation and classroom dynamics.

2. **The classroom observation**
   - Observation, by me, of two sequences of lessons (3-4 lessons) in a Year 10 French class, one sequence in Term 3 and the other early in Term 4. This will include audio and video-taping the lessons. This process will be managed to ensure that it is as unobtrusive as possible.
   - During the *first sequence* of lessons, completion of a brief pro-forma by the LOTE teacher soon after the end of each lesson.
   - At the end of the *first sequence* of lessons, I plan to interview a group of students about their perception of classroom interaction. I will seek volunteers for this activity, which should take approximately 30 mins. The activity will be conducted out of class time, on school premises, at a time convenient to the students and the school.

3. **After the classroom observation**
   - At the end of the *second sequence* of lessons, I would like the LOTE teacher to participate in a session where we view selected segments of the lessons that have been video-taped and I will ask the teacher to comment on them. This should take about 45 mins and will be arranged at a time and place that suits the teacher.
   - Pairs of student volunteers will be asked to view and comment on the same lesson segments that were viewed by the LOTE teacher. This will take about 30 mins per pair and will take place outside class time, on school premises, at a time convenient to the students and the school.

Ethical Issues

The following steps will be taken to protect the confidentiality and privacy of those who participate in the research:

- The confidentiality of the students, the teacher and the school will be guaranteed by the use of pseudonyms. These will be used in any written account of this research, so that they will not be able to be identified.
- All information relevant to each of the subjects will be made available to them, at their request.
- Field notes, audio and video tapes and related transcripts, pro-formas completed by teachers, transcriptions of student interviews and of sessions where teachers and students comment on segments of video taped lessons will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's home office.
- No part of the data collected will be disclosed to third parties such as teachers, other personnel from the school or from outside the school. This will help ensure the confidentiality of the data collected as part of this research. The data will be available to my supervisor, Dr. Rhonda Oliver.

If you give permission for the research to be carried out in your school, formal consent to participate in the project will be obtained from (name of teacher). Consent for students to participate will be obtained from their parents/guardians. (Name of teacher), the students and their parents will be fully informed about all aspects of the research and have the opportunity to ask questions about it. They will also be informed that they may withdraw from the project at any time, without prejudice. A copy of the consent form to be used for this purpose is attached.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this research please contact me on (telephone number). You can also contact me by e-mail at the following address: r.tognini@ecu.edu.au

Yours sincerely

RITA TOGNINI
(date)

CONSENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE
The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions

*Please complete and return to your LOTE teacher **by (date).***

STUDENT

I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN

I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree for my child to participate in this activity, realising that he/she may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided he/she is not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

Investigator's Signature: _____**Date:** _____

FOR PARTICIPANTS - PLEASE TEAR OFF AND KEEP

………………………………………………………………………………………………

Any questions concerning the research project, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions,* can be directed to RITA TOGNINI, School of Community, Education and English Studies, on (telephone number).

If you have any concerns about the project or would like to speak to an independent person, you may contact:

Dr. Yvonne Haig, Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University,
Tel. (08) 9400 5491 (Monday and Wednesday)**; (08) 9370 6733** (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

APPENDIX 8: Letter to teachers participating in the research project

Researcher's address

Dear (teacher's first name)

Thanks for agreeing to help me with my PhD. What I'd like to do in this letter is give you a bit more background about my area of research and what it would mean for you if you became involved. As you're aware from my recent phone call, I'm working in the area of second language acquisition (with particular reference to languages other than English) and the topic I intend to investigate is classroom interaction. My topic, specifically, is, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions.*

I'm interested in this area for a number of reasons. Interaction is an important aspect of second language learning theory and it's also an important feature of the approach to language teaching advocated in current curriculum documents and textbooks. However, interaction has not been studied to any extent in the languages other than English (LOTE) primary and secondary classroom context, and certainly not in Western Australia. Hence my interest in exploring learners' interaction and the language use it leads to in these contexts. I'd also like to find out more about the perceptions teachers and learners have about this interaction.

The questions my research will attempt to answer are:
1. What is the nature and pattern of interaction in LOTE classes?

2. What language is used in particular types of interaction?

3. What effect do the different types of interaction have on learners' language production?

4. What are the contexts that facilitate engagement in interaction?

5. How do these contexts influence interaction and language use?

Here's what helping me with this research will mean for you.
- I need to observe two sequences of lessons (3-4 lessons) in your Year 10 French class in two successive terms (early term 3 and term 4). This will include audio and video taping the lessons.
- During the *first sequence* of lessons I would also like you to fill in a brief pro-forma at the end of each lesson.
- At the end of the *second sequence* of lessons I would like you to participate in a session where we view selected segments of the lessons that have been video-taped and I ask you to comment on them. This should take about 45 mins and will be arranged at a time and place that suits you.

I'll also need to make contact with you before I start the observation to get an idea of what your classroom setup is like and to find out a bit about the kind of things you're planning

to do with the students. It would be very helpful if I could sit in on one you your lessons, before I start the formal observation, so I can get an idea of classroom layout, organisation and dynamics.

If I can get volunteers, I would also like to do the following with some of the students from the class which I observed:

- At the end of the *first sequence* of lessons interview a group of students about their perceptions of classroom interaction.
- At the end of the *second sequence* of lessons get selected pairs of students to view and comment on the same lesson segments that you viewed.

Both of these activities will be done outside class time, on school premises, at a time convenient to students and the school.

Ethical Issues

The following steps will be taken to protect your confidentiality and privacy and the confidentiality and privacy of your students and school:

- The use of pseudonyms in any written account of this research is guaranteed. Pseudonyms will be used so that you (and your students and school) will not be able to be identified.
- All information relevant to you will be made available to you, on request.
- All data collected during the research will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office.
- No part of the data collected will be disclosed to third parties such as other teachers, other personnel from your school or officers from the Department of Education. The data will be available to my supervisor, Dr. Rhonda Oliver.

You will need to give formal consent to participate in the research project. Consent for students to participate will be obtained from their parents/guardians. This consent includes the understanding that you can withdraw from the project at any time, without prejudice. A copy of the consent form to be used for this purpose is attached.

I believe this research will provide important information about the nature and pattern of interaction of LOTE classroom learners, the contexts that facilitate this interaction and learners' and teachers' perception of it. I hope it will inform and contribute positively to your work as a teacher.

I'll be in touch with you in the near future to answer any questions you may have about the research and to discuss a possible starting time. If you need to contact me, my home telephone number is (telephone number). You can also contact me by e-mail at the following address: r.tognini@ecu.edu.au

Many thanks again for your help and best wishes.

RITA TOGNINI
(date)

CONSENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE
The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions

I, _____ , have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Participant: _____**Date:** _____

Investigator: _____**Date:** _____

For information of participants. Please tear off and keep.
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Any questions concerning the research project, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions,* can be directed to RITA TOGNINI, School of Community, Education and English Studies, on (telephone number).

If you have any concerns about the project or would like to speak to an independent person, you may contact:

Dr. Yvonne Haig, Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University,
Tel. (08) 9400 5491 (Monday and Wednesday)**; (08) 9370 6733** (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

APPENDIX 9: Questions about the school and LOTE program

1. Please briefly describe your school (size, population, socio-economic background, resources, physical and social environment) and how the LOTE program fits into the curriculum.

2. Could you describe, in general terms, your approach to teaching languages other than English?

3. Do you have a preferred way of organising your classroom for LOTE? Please describe this.

4. Could you describe the range of activities you typically undertake in class I'm going to observe?

5. What are the main elements of the LOTE program you have planned for the class this term? For the year?

6. What level of the LOTE Student Outcome Statement would the majority of the students in this class have achieved?

7. What would you like these students to be able to do, using the L2, by the end of the year?

8. Do you have other outcomes you would like to achieve? Could you tell me what they are?

9. For how many years have the students in this class studied French/Italian (excluding this year)?

10. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your work as a LOTE teacher with this class?

APPENDIX 10: Information for students

The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners Research Project

My name is Rita Tognini and I'm a PhD student at Edith Cowan University. I'd like to tell you about the research project I'll be carrying out in your LOTE class at your school.

The topic I'm going to be researching is classroom interaction. I'd like to find out the following things about how learners of languages other than English (LOTE) interact in their lessons:

1. What is the nature and pattern of interaction in LOTE classes?

2. What language is used in particular types of interaction?

3. What effect do the different types of interaction have on learners' language production?

4. What are the contexts that facilitate engagement in interaction?

5. How do these contexts influence interaction and language use?

What will you have to do for the research project?
To answer these questions, I'm going to be observing three or four of your LOTE lessons in term 3 and the same number of lessons in term 4. I'll be audio and video-taping these lessons, as well as taking notes. So, the **main thing** I need you to do is just to participate normally in the LOTE lessons I'll be observing.

I'd also like to ask you to do two other things.
- Be interviewed by me (with a group of other students from the class) about the interaction that occurs in the class. The interview will take about 30 minutes.
- View and comment on some parts of the lessons that are video-taped. This will also take about 30 mins.

Both these tasks will be done out of class time, on school premises, at a time convenient to you, your school and teacher. You'll be able to choose whether or not you'd like to be involved in these tasks.

Protecting your privacy
I'll be doing the following things to make sure the information I collect about your class is used properly:
- When I write about the research, I'll give you and your classmates, your teacher and the school made-up names, so people won't be able to recognise any of you.
- You can ask to find out about information I collect about you, in particular.
- I'll be looking after the information I collect very carefully and keeping it in a locked filing cabinet in my home office.

- Others in the school (eg. teachers, the principal) or outside it will **not** be shown the information I collect. The only person who will see it apart from me, is my supervisor, Dr. Rhonda Oliver.

Consent

The school and your teacher have agreed to be involved in this research project. I also need your consent and that of your parents to carry it out. I've written a letter for your parents about the project which I'd like you to give to them. Please ask them to read it carefully and discuss it with you. Attached to this letter is a copy of the CONSENT FORM (see example below) which has to be completed and returned to your LOTE teacher **within the next two weeks.**

If you or your parents change your mind and want to withdraw from the project, you can do this at any time. If you would like to talk about any part of this research please contact me on 9272 3797. You can also e-mail me at the following address: r.tognini@ecu.edu.au

RITA TOGNINI
(Date)

EXAMPLE of CONSENT FORM
PROJECT TITLE
The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions

Please complete and return to your LOTE teacher by_____.

STUDENT
I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN
I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
I agree for my child to participate in this activity, realising that he/she may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided he/she is not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

Investigator's Signature: _____**Date:** _____

FOR PARTICIPANTS - PLEASE TEAR OFF AND KEEP
……………………………………………………………………………………
 Any questions concerning the research project, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions,* can be directed to RITA TOGNINI, School of Community, Education and English Studies, on (telephone number).
If you have any concerns about the project or would like to speak to an independent person, you may contact:
Dr. Yvonne Haig, Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University,
Tel. (08) 9400 5491 (Monday and Wednesday)**; (08) 9370 6733** (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

CONSENT FORM

<div style="border:1px solid black">

PROJECT TITLE
The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions

</div>

*Please complete and return to your LOTE teacher **by (date)**.*

STUDENT
I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN
I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
I agree for my child to participate in this activity, realising that he/she may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided he/she is not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

Investigator's Signature: _____**Date:** _____

FOR PARTICIPANTS - PLEASE TEAR OFF AND KEEP
……………………………………………………………………………………………
Any questions concerning the research project, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions,* can be directed to RITA TOGNINI, School of Community, Education and English Studies, on (telephone number).

If you have any concerns about the project or would like to speak to an independent person, you may contact:

Dr. Yvonne Haig, Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University,
Tel. (08) 9400 5491 (Monday and Wednesday)**; (08) 9370 6733** (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

APPENDIX 11: Letter to parents

<div align="right">Researcher's address</div>

Dear Parent/Guardian

My name is Rita Tognini and I'm a PhD student in Applied Linguistics at Edith Cowan University. I'm writing to ask permission for your child to participate in the research project I'll be carrying out in his/her LOTE class at school.

The area I'm interested in is how second language learning takes place in the classroom. The topic I'm going to be investigating is, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions.*

The questions my research will attempt to answer are:

1. What is the nature and pattern of interaction in languages other than English classes?

2. What language is used in particular types of interaction?

3. What effect do the different types of interaction have on learners' language production?

4. What are the contexts that facilitate engagement in interaction?

5. How do these contexts influence interaction and language use?

What will the research project mean for your child?

To try to answer these questions, I plan to observe three or four lessons in term 3 and the same number early in term 4. These will be the normal lessons planned by the teacher. I will be audio and video-taping these lessons, as well as taking notes. I will make every effort not to disrupt the lessons.

I also plan to do the following:
- Interview a group of students about classroom interaction. This will take place at the end of the first sequence of lessons and will take about 30 minutes.
- Ask pairs of students to view and comment on some parts of lessons that were video-taped. This will take about 30 mins per pair.

I will ask for volunteers for these two activities. They will be conducted out of class time, on school premises, at a time convenient to the students and the school.

Ethical Issues

I'll be doing the following things to protect the confidentiality and privacy of your son/daughter and of their teacher and school:

- Not using real names in any written account of this research. Made up names will be used so that your son/daughter (and their teacher and school) will not be able to be identified.
- All information relevant to your son/daughter will be made available to them or you, on request.
- All data collected during the research will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office.
- No part of the data collected will be shown to third parties such as other teachers, other personnel from your school or officers from the Department of Education. The data will be available to my supervisor, Dr. Rhonda Oliver.

I hope you will give permission for your child to participate in this research project. To do this you need to complete the CONSENT FORM attached to this letter and ask your child to return it to his/her LOTE teacher **within the next two weeks**. Please note that if you change your mind about this, your child can withdraw from the project at any time, without being disadvantaged in any way.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this research please contact me on (telephone number). You can also contact me by e-mail at the following address:
r.tognini@ecu.edu.au

Thanking you, in anticipation, for your support.

Yours sincerely

RITA TOGNINI
(date)

CONSENT FORM

*Please complete and return to your LOTE teacher **by (date).***

STUDENT
I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN
I, _____, have been informed about all aspects of the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
I agree for my child to participate in this activity, realising that he/she may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided he/she is not identifiable.

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

Investigator's Signature: _____**Date:** _____

FOR PARTICIPANTS - PLEASE TEAR OFF AND KEEP
……………………………………………………………………………………………
Any questions concerning the research project, *The Classroom Interaction of LOTE Learners: Theory, Practice and Perceptions,* can be directed to RITA TOGNINI, School of Community, Education and English Studies, on (telephone number).

If you have any concerns about the project or would like to speak to an independent person, you may contact:

Dr. Yvonne Haig, Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University,
Tel. (08) 9400 5491 (Monday and Wednesday)**; (08) 9370 6733** (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

APPENDIX 12: Example of a detailed lesson overview

School: Sassafras Secondary   **Year Level:** Year 10   **Date:** 20 August

Time (mins)	Pedagogical event	L1/L2	Interaction	Comments
2.08	Lesson commences. The teacher asks several students how they are.	French	T-S	Focus on interaction with individuals.
2.31	The teacher explains that she wants them to think of food combinations that don't go together well and could be considered 'dégoûtant' (disgusting).	English	T-C	
3.04	The teacher further explores the concept of dégoûtant and its opposite, illustrating with examples. Concludes with the remark, "C'est dégoûtant." (It's disgusting.) Students respond to examples with "yuk".	French	T-C	Uses antonyms and synonyms. Student responses indicate they have understood the explanation in French.
6.10	The teacher explains the pair work activity students are going to do.	English	T-C	
6.25	Students work together in pairs to describe the contents of a sandwich that are 'dégoûtant' because of the odd mixture of ingredients. The teacher moves around between pairs, commenting and asking questions.	French/ English French/ English	L-L T-SG	Tape recorder is near three female students who speak almost entirely in English.
17.04	The teacher stops the class and asks students to read out what they have come up with.	French	T-C	
17.16	Student A reads to the class what she and her partner consider to be 'dégoûtant'.	French	Student reads to the class.	
17.22	The teacher's response to Student A's description is, "C'est dégoûtant." The teacher then asks Student S if she agrees with this comment. Student S doesn't appear to understand so the teacher asks if she has heard and repeats Student A's description.	French	T-S (NB: response is to individuals but by implication to whole class.)	Student A repeats the teacher's repetition of her description *sottovoce* - (private speech).

17.52	The teacher asks Student A the kind of cheese she has in her sandwich and adds, "Aubergine et fromage – c'est yum , yum!"		T-S	The teacher doesn't appear to have given Student S a chance to respond to her original query.
18.12	Student R describes the contents of the sandwich she and her partner considered to be 'dégoûtant'.	French	Student reads to the class.	
18.27	The teacher reviews the reading and corrects a word.	French	T- S	
18.51	Student E reads her description.	French	French	
19.22	The teacher reviews the reading and comments on it.	French	T- S	
19.34	Student N reads his description.	French	Student reads to the class.	Very brief description.
20.02	The teacher gives reinforcement with, "C'est dégoûtant."	French	T- S	
20.05	Student J reads his description.	French	Student reads to the class.	The description is more detailed than others so far.
20.20	The teacher reviews and gives positive reinforcement.	French	T- S	
20.28	Student K reads her description	French	Student reads to the class.	This student reads her description more confidently than the others, perhaps because she has studied French for five years.
20.42	The teacher comments and corrects the pronunciation of 'les condiments'.	French	T-S	
20.48	Student S reads her description	French	Student reads to the class.	
20.56	The teacher seeks clarification.	French	T-S	
21.10	The teacher corrects words mispronounced and comments at some length.	French	T-C	

21.47	The teacher introduces the next activity and asks students to take out worksheets from previous lesson. She explains that they will practice the pair work activity dialogue, 'au restaurant' in preparation for the two-way task they'll be doing in pairs.	French English	T-C	Instructions are given in French first, then the teacher revert to English.
23.10	The teacher reads out model dialogue on worksheet.	French	T-C	
24.16	The teacher asks a pair of students to read the dialogue. Students J and B read the dialogue	English French	T-SG Students read to the class.	
25.25	The teacher corrects Student B's pronunciation of 'vin' and then selects another pair.	French English	T-C	
25.33	Students K and S read the dialogue.	French	Students read to the class.	
26.25	The teacher corrects Student K's pronunciation of 'principal'.	French	T-C	
26.36	The teacher explains the two-way task outlined on the worksheet. She first reviews the phrases in the 'préparation' section of the worksheet which students can use to help them complete the task. She then explains that the student who is the customer will use information in Sheet A1 and the student who is the waiter information Sheet B1. There are six scenarios. Students can do the first three, swapping roles.	English	T-C	The explanation begins in French, but the teacher switches almost immediately to English. After two minutes she switches back to French for about 30 seconds and then reverts to English for the rest of the time.
31.10	Students work on two-way pair tasks. Students S and S and student J and K taped. Students K and N videotaped. The teacher moves around between pairs, commenting and asking questions.	French/ English French/ English	L-L T-SG	Both pairs of students attempt to speak French. However students move continuously between French and English and revert to English for task management and to deal with and clarify linguistic difficulties.

41.45	Students swap roles	French/ English	L-L	
44.10	Tape is moved to Students J and K.	French/ English	L-L	Very little interaction occurs between these two students. The task may be too easy for them.
48.30	The teacher speaks to Students J and K.	French/ English	T-SG	
49.25	The teacher explains the follow-up work students have to do for homework in order to prepare for the role play they're going to do in the next lesson.	English	T-C	
50.38	End of lesson.			