

Investigating Classroom Discourse

Steve Walsh

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Investigating Classroom Discourse

‘Investigating Classroom Discourse will be of central interest to all who wish to understand and investigate the classroom interactions which take place between teachers and students. Based on the author’s own model of classroom teacher talk, the book provides a comprehensive and balanced introduction to theoretical, empirical and practical aspects of interaction. Its clear exposition and wealth of examples from a range of classrooms make it an ideal text for both practising teachers and those in preparation.’

David Nunan PhD, *Chair Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Hong Kong*

‘This book reveals the complex and dynamic nature of second language classroom interaction and proposes a variable approach to its study. Walsh successfully blends current discourse analytic approaches with reflective practices for teacher development. The discussion is clearly illustrated by data extracts from a variety of teaching settings and would be suitable for introductory courses on classroom interaction.’

Dr Paul Seedhouse, *Postgraduate Research Director, Senior Lecturer, University of Newcastle upon Tyne*

Investigating Classroom Discourse presents language use and interaction as the basis of good teaching and learning, and provides teachers and researchers with the tools to analyse classroom discourse and move towards more effective instruction.

The book provides an overview of the existing approaches to describing and analysing classroom discourse and identifies the principal characteristics of classroom language in the contexts of second language classrooms, primary and secondary classrooms and higher education settings.

Using spoken corpora, such as classroom recordings and reflective feedback interviews from a sample group of teachers, Steve Walsh puts forward SETT (Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk) as a framework for analysing discourse within the classroom. The framework is used to identify different modes of discourse, which are employed by teachers and students, to increase awareness of the importance of interaction and to maximize learning opportunities.

Investigating Classroom Discourse will appeal to applied linguists, teachers and researchers of TESOL, as well as practitioners on MEd or taught doctorate programmes.

Steve Walsh is Lecturer at the Graduate School of Education, Queen’s University, Belfast.



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Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | vii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1 Features of classroom discourse | 3 |
| <i>Introduction</i> | 3 |
| <i>Control of patterns of communication</i> | 5 |
| <i>Elicitation techniques</i> | 7 |
| <i>Repair</i> | 10 |
| <i>Modifying speech to learners</i> | 12 |
| 2 Learning in the second language classroom | 16 |
| <i>Introduction</i> | 16 |
| <i>Classrooms as social contexts</i> | 16 |
| <i>Classroom interaction and second language acquisition</i> | 20 |
| <i>Socio-cultural theory and language learning</i> | 32 |
| <i>Summary</i> | 38 |
| 3 Approaches to analysing classroom discourse | 39 |
| <i>Introduction</i> | 39 |
| <i>Interaction analysis approaches</i> | 39 |
| <i>Discourse analysis approaches</i> | 45 |
| <i>Conversation analysis approaches</i> | 49 |
| <i>A variable approach to investigating L2 classroom interaction</i> | 55 |
| <i>Summary</i> | 61 |
| 4 A framework for analysing classroom interaction | 62 |
| <i>Introduction</i> | 62 |
| <i>Establishing modes</i> | 63 |
| <i>Deviant cases</i> | 82 |
| <i>Summary</i> | 91 |

| | | |
|----------|---|------------|
| 5 | Using SETT in different contexts | 93 |
| | <i>Introduction</i> | 93 |
| | <i>Investigating primary classrooms</i> | 93 |
| | <i>Investigating EFL secondary classrooms</i> | 98 |
| | <i>Investigating Irish-medium education</i> | 104 |
| | <i>Investigating higher education interaction</i> | 105 |
| | <i>Summary</i> | 109 |
| 6 | Using SETT for teacher education | 111 |
| | <i>Introduction</i> | 111 |
| | <i>The reflective feedback corpus</i> | 112 |
| | <i>Teachers' identification of modes</i> | 113 |
| | <i>SETT and critical reflective practice</i> | 125 |
| | <i>Classroom interactional competence (CIC)</i> | 130 |
| | <i>Summary</i> | 143 |
| 7 | Conclusions | 144 |
| | <i>Introduction</i> | 144 |
| | <i>SETT and second language acquisition</i> | 144 |
| | <i>SETT and second language teaching</i> | 154 |
| | <i>SETT and second language teacher education</i> | 157 |
| | <i>Future research directions</i> | 161 |
| | | |
| | <i>Appendix 1: Transcription system</i> | 165 |
| | <i>Appendix 2: SETT procedure</i> | 166 |
| | <i>Appendix 3: SETT workshop materials</i> | 169 |
| | | |
| | <i>Notes</i> | 171 |
| | <i>References</i> | 172 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 185 |

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Introduction

This book is about classroom discourse. It is concerned to identify meaningful ways of investigating the interaction which takes place between teachers and their students in order to gain insights into class-based learning. The main aim of the book is to help teachers and researchers attain a closer understanding of how language use and interactive decision-making affect intended learning outcomes. The second language classroom is portrayed as a dynamic and complex series of interrelated contexts, in which interaction is seen as being central to teaching and learning. The book confirms that an understanding of the interactional organization of the second language classroom can be achieved through the use of SETT (Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk) procedures, supported by reflection and dialogue. While the book concerns itself primarily with second language classrooms, other educational contexts are also considered, including primary and secondary classrooms, an immersion classroom and higher education settings.

Although the relationship between language use and learning has been the focus of much attention for a number of years, it is still only partially understood. Our understanding of that relationship can only be advanced once we have appropriate tools, procedures and a language that facilitates dialogue. In this book, I present a framework which is designed to help enhance our understanding of the complex relationship between teacher talk, classroom interaction and learning opportunity.

Like all the books in this series, this book rests on a number of small spoken corpora which have been used to inform the main outcomes. Specifically, the book has been written using evidence from three corpora:

- (a) Classroom recordings of TESOL classes in a British university: a total of around 100,000 words;
- (b) Reflective feedback interviews between myself and the teachers whose lessons were recorded: approximately 65,000 words;
- (c) Stimulated recall interviews using video-recorded lessons and an accompanying commentary by the same group of teachers: this corpus totals around 50,000 words.

While each corpus offers a unique perspective on educational discourse, combined together they offer a fine-grained and ‘up-close’ description of classroom interaction. The small corpora, locally derived and intended for private use, have a number of attributes. First, they are highly context-specific and offer detailed insights into teaching and learning processes; second, they allow teachers and researchers to gain a detailed understanding of the ‘text’ of the lessons which have been recorded; third, they permit understandings to be developed and enhanced in other contexts. Arguably, it is through the use of small corpora, like the ones used in this book, that teachers and researchers will gain a fuller understanding of their local context.

The book consists of seven chapters which can be read consecutively or individually. The first three deal with the nature of classroom discourse, the relationship between classroom interaction and learning, in addition to the procedures presently available for describing classroom discourse. Chapter 4 introduces the SETT framework and procedures and considers how its application can help promote greater understanding. In Chapter 5, the framework is evaluated in a range of educational contexts to assess its applicability and usefulness. Chapter 6 adopts a teacher education perspective by considering how SETT can develop teachers’ understanding of their classes’ interactional organization. In Chapter 7, the main conclusions are presented through a consideration of the framework’s ability to inform our understanding of second language acquisition, second language teaching and teacher education.

The chapters in the book need not be read in sequence. Some readers may already have a good understanding of the nature of classroom discourse, of its relationship to learning and of methods for investigating it. These readers may find that they are able to begin at Chapter 4 which introduces the SETT framework. Readers who do not have such a detailed knowledge and understanding of classroom discourse are advised to read the earlier chapters.

Regardless of the manner in which the book is read, I hope that readers are able to see the applications of SETT to their own context and even make use of the framework in their own professional practice.

1 Features of classroom discourse

Introduction

In this chapter, as a first step towards characterizing classroom interaction, I present and evaluate some of the key features of second language (L2) classroom discourse. Throughout the chapter, the position adopted is that teachers should, and indeed do, play a much more central role than that advocated under both Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-based Language Learning (TBLL). Rather than simply ‘handing over’ to a group of learners by emphasizing pair- and group-work, it is the teacher’s ability to *manage* learner contributions which will, arguably, determine the success or otherwise of a lesson. In light of the centrality of this role, the discussion which follows focuses principally on features of classroom discourse which are essentially the responsibility of the teacher. These are: control of patterns of communication; elicitation techniques; repair strategies; and modifying speech to learners.

The communication patterns found in language classrooms are special, different from those found in content-based subjects. Communication is unique because the linguistic forms used are often simultaneously the aim of a lesson and the means of achieving those aims. Meaning and message are one and the same thing, ‘the vehicle and object of instruction’ (Long, 1983a: 9); language is both the focus of activity, the central objective of the lesson, as well as the instrument for achieving it (Willis, 1992). This situation is, in many respects, atypical, most unlike, for example, the one prevailing in a history or geography lesson, where attention is principally on the message, not on the language used. As Thornbury (2000: 28) puts it:

language classrooms are *language* classrooms [original emphasis], and for the teacher to monopolise control of the discourse – through, for example, asking only display questions – while possibly appropriate to the culture of geography or maths classes, would seem to deny language learners access to what they most need – opportunities for real language use.

The consequence of this observation is that any attempt to analyse communication in the L2 classroom must take account first of all of its uniqueness and second

of its complexity. As Cazden points out (1986: 432), classroom communication is a 'problematic medium'. The process of communication in a TESOL¹ context – a multinational, multilingual and multicultural setting – is further complicated by the fact that misunderstandings, which almost certainly impair teaching and learning, are potentially more frequent. This is due to the differences in the backgrounds, expectations and perceptions of language learners, together with the status they attach to the teacher, who may be the only native-speaker present. Clashes of expectations are by no means uncommon in the EFL context and frequently present the teacher with enormous interactional difficulties (Shamin, 1996). An understanding of the dynamics of classroom discourse is therefore essential for teachers to establish and maintain good communicative practices (Johnson, 1995). The first step in gaining such an understanding is familiarization with the features of L2 classroom discourse.

Recent surveys of interaction in classes which adopt a predominantly CLT methodology identify a number of broad characteristics. For example, Spada and Lightbown (1993) have commented that features such as the limited amount of error correction, the emphasis on communication over accuracy, and learners' exposure to a wide range of discourse types distinguish the communicative classroom from more 'traditional' learning modes. Other studies have focused on the interactive differences between lockstep, whole class teaching and more decentralized, interactive modes of learning (Porter, 1986; Rulon and Creary, 1986; Foster, 1998). Perhaps surprisingly, there is now a growing body of evidence to suggest that peer interaction is not as effective as was once thought in promoting acquisition (Dörnyei and Malderez, 1997; Foster, 1998). Rampton clearly questions the value of learner–learner interaction (1999: 333): 'some of the data we have looked at itself provides grounds for doubting any assumption that peer group rituals automatically push acquisition forwards'.

Observations like the previous one are borne out in other studies (see, for example, Mitchell and Martin, 1997) and later in this book (see Chapters 2 and 6), indicating that the role of the teacher in *shaping* classroom interaction may need to be reconsidered, as may the very notion of whole class teaching. Simply handing over to learners is apparently an inadequate means of promoting second language acquisition (SLA); there is both an expectation and responsibility that the teacher is there to *teach* the second language, not simply to organize practice activities. Indeed, in most parts of the world, if they simply 'handed over' to learners, teachers would be criticized for not doing their job or would be accused of shirking responsibilities. The assumption of the teacher as 'mere facilitator' may be a middle-class, western, culture-bound perspective.

As a first step to understanding communication in the second language classroom, the remainder of this chapter presents a description of the principal characteristics of L2 classroom discourse, largely from the teacher's perspective. Four

features have been selected as being typical and representative of the context: control of patterns of communication; elicitation techniques; repair strategies; modifying speech to learners.

Control of patterns of communication

The features of second language classroom discourse are easy to identify and present a very clear structure, where teachers control both the topic of conversation and turn-taking. Students take their cues from the teacher through whom they direct most of their responses. Owing to their special status, L2 teachers control most of the patterns of communication (Johnson, 1995), primarily through the ways in which they restrict or allow learners' interaction (Ellis, 1998), take control of the topic (Slimani, 1989), and facilitate or hinder learning opportunities (Walsh, 2002). Put simply, even in the most decentralized L2 classroom, it is the teacher who 'orchestrates the interaction' (Breen, 1998: 119).

The underlying structure of second language lessons is typically represented by sequences of discourse 'moves' IR(E/F), where I is teacher initiation, R is learner response and E/F is an optional evaluation or feedback by the teacher (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). In later versions of the model, F became follow-up. Throughout the remainder of this book, the model is referred to as the IRF sequence, as illustrated below:

Extract 1.1

- (I) T Two things to establish for the writer at the beginning of the story. One situation situation. What is the situation at the beginning of the story anybody? What's the situation Douglas? Have you read the story Douglas?
- (R) S No sir.
- (F) T Ah that won't help then will it who's read the story what is the situation at the beginning Michael? Is it Michael?

(Walsh, 1987)

As can be seen in Extract 1.1, for every move made by the learner, a teacher makes two, leading Chaudron (1988) to the conclusion that teacher talk represents approximately two-thirds of classroom speech. It is both particular to the classroom and characterized by it. Other writers have commented on the appropriacy of the IRF sequence to any instructional setting (see, for example, Drew and Heritage, 1992; Barnes, 1992; Nystrand, 1997), while Musumeci (1996) suggests that more 'traditional' IRF interaction patterns prevail for four reasons. First, teachers' and students' expectations regard question and answer routines as appropriate classroom behaviour.

This is how conversation, in a classroom, is characterized. Second, teachers feel the need to make learners ‘feel good’. The feedback given by a teacher to a student is important and necessary. Third, the system of power relations in most classes means that it is the teacher who has more of the ‘floor’ owing to asymmetrical roles (cf. Lin, 2000). Finally, the time constraints facing teachers confirm question and answer routines as the most effective means of advancing the discourse.

Kasper (2001) argues that the IRF sequence is frequently perceived negatively in language classrooms since learners are afforded minimum interactional space. She goes on to suggest how this position is improved when teachers offer learners greater participation rights and a more central position in the interaction. McCarthy (2003) advocates ‘listenership’ in the follow-up move of the IRF exchange: the ability of learners to demonstrate that they are engaged in the discourse even when they are not the main speaker. Clearly, as McCarthy says, this is a skill that is more closely related to speaking than listening. Arguably, it is a skill that teachers can foster through more careful interactions with learners.

In the L2 classroom, teachers control both the content and the procedure of the learning-process. According to Cazden (1986), some of the features of the L2 classroom context include: teachers control the topic of discussion; teachers control who may participate and when; students take their cues from teachers; role relationships between teachers and learners are unequal; teachers are responsible for managing the interaction which occurs; teachers talk more. Johnson (1995) supports Cazden, suggesting that teachers control both the content and structure of classroom communication, at least in part, by their use of language. Furthermore, their decision as to whether to tightly control the topic of discussion or whether to allow a more egalitarian discourse structure in which students self-select and have a more equal share in turn-taking, is not random. Her conclusion, that teachers influence learner participation both by the ways in which they use language and by what they bring to the classroom, adds further weight to the argument for increasing teacher awareness of language use.

In Extract 1.2 below, for example, note how the teacher selects who may talk (turn 1), controls the topic of conversation (1), selects another speaker (7), evaluates the learner’s performance (3, 5, 7), manages both language form (*what’s the verb* in 5) and the message (*they go to* in 5). Note too how the predominance of an IRF structure characterizes this extract as a piece of classroom discourse.

Extract 1.2

- 1 I T ok Erica could you explain something about law and order in Japan
what happens if you commit a crime?
- 2 R L1 almost same as Britain policeman come to take somebody to police
station

- 3 F T yes
 4 R L1 and prisoner questioned and if he is (5 seconds unintelligible)
 5 F/I T yes what's the verb Eric Erica ... if she or he yes [commits a crime]
 they go to
 6 R L1 they go to court yes but if they he they didn't do that they can go home
 7 F/I T they can go home (...) very good indeed right what happens in Brazil

Apart from *controlling* classroom discourse, teachers also help *create* a specific type of linguistic code. A longitudinal study conducted by Moje (1995) with science teachers in an ESL context indicates that teachers create a speech community in which their (i.e. teachers') use of language encourages or prevents identification with that community among students. Moje found that students learned to 'talk science' because of an insistence by their teacher on the acquisition of appropriate scientific terminology, and that students progress faster and further if they are appropriately equipped linguistically. Further, the teachers' use of language enabled the construction of pedagogical and content registers; in other words, the teacher gained the respect and co-operation of the class by her use of language.

Moje's study is a powerful indication of the influence language can exert in a closely-defined speech community – in this case, an ESL science classroom. Membership of the speech community is dependent on learners' ability to assimilate and utilize the language of that community; success can only be ensured if teachers are able to equip their learners with the communicative competence needed to cope with both the subject matter and skills associated with that discipline. The responsibility for promoting efficient and effective language use resides with the teacher. A prerequisite for this process is that teachers are themselves able to comprehend not only the basics but some of the finer nuances behind language use in their classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 1999). 'Getting the best' out of a group of learners – that is, facilitating contributions, helping them say what they mean, understand what they are studying and making sure the rest of the group is able to follow – is dependent on a teacher's ability to make *professional* use of language. This ability has to be learned and practised over time, in the same way that teachers acquire and perfect classroom teaching skills.

Elicitation techniques

Typically, classroom discourse is dominated by question and answer routines, with teachers asking most of the questions as one of the principal ways in which they control the discourse. According to Chaudron (1988), most of the studies on teachers' questioning behaviour have examined the ways in which questions facilitate the production of target language forms or correct content-related responses. Many of the question-types selected and used by language teachers are of the

closed variety and produce only short responses from students. Other studies have focused on the extent to which questions produce responses which are 'communicative', arguing that referential questions are more likely to produce 'natural' responses than display questions (see, for example, Long and Sato, 1983; Brock, 1986; Nunan, 1987).

Later studies (Banbrook and Skehan, 1990; Seedhouse, 1996) query the value of the typical distinction between *display* and *referential* questions. Traditionally, display questions, to which the teacher already knows the answer (e.g.: *what's the past tense of go?*) are seen as being functionally different from referential questions, where the answer is not known in advance (e.g. *do you have any brothers and sisters?*) and typically produce shorter, simpler responses from learners. While accepting that the purpose of all questions is to elicit responses, the display/referential distinction is, arguably, a useful one which teachers should be aware of (Thompson, 1997; Cullen, 1998). According to a teacher's pedagogic goal, different question types are more or less appropriate: the extent to which a question produces a communicative response is less important than the extent to which a question serves its purpose at a particular point in a lesson. In short, the use of appropriate questioning strategies requires an understanding of the *function* of a question in relation to what is being taught (Nunn, 1999).

Wintergest (1993) examined the failure of many teachers to ask why-questions or questions that promote longer responses. Her findings show that the frequency of why-questions increases with both the age and level of students. Why-questions are also more predominant in discussion lessons, where they initiate longer responses. The frequency of why-questions among teachers and students is extremely low (2.5 per cent of all questions asked), a finding which, if typical, suggests that both the quantity and quality of student contributions is likely to be mediocre. Wintergest's study confirms that 42 per cent of all why-questions elicited longer answers. Furthermore, the finding illustrates the importance a teacher's choice of questioning strategies can have on learner participation.

Long and Sato (1983) detail the complex role played by questions in classrooms; they can serve to signal turns, aid comprehensibility, provide opportunities for non-native speakers to participate or even compel involvement. They also make the important observation that a teacher's use of questions is the single most-used discourse modification to aid and maintain participation among learners. In other words, classroom discourse differs from 'normal' communication in terms of the number of questions used and their function: to encourage involvement rather than elicit new information, an observation developed by Musumeci (1996). In that study, Musumeci makes the point that the length and complexity of learner utterances are determined more by whether a question is closed or open than whether it is a referential or display one.

In Extract 1.3 below, note how the turn-taking and length and type of learner

contribution are very strongly influenced by the nature of the questions being asked. In this extract, all questions are of the display, 'closed' variety, evolving from a reading passage which the class has just read. If the teacher's agenda at this stage in the lesson is to check comprehension, then her choice of elicitation technique is appropriate and in line with her pedagogic goal. If, however, she aims to promote class discussion, a different type of questioning strategy would be needed, using more open, referential questions.

Extract 1.3

- 11 T no if you look at the first sentence Liyan can you read the first sentence please
- 12 L3 lot of gold in the sea
- 13 uhuh and then the LAST sentence (**reading**) the treasure in the ocean might just as well not exist ... what treasure? ... Ying?
- 14 L2 in the seawater
- 15 yes yeah so the SEAwater is another name for? ... in this case? another way of saying ... what? Cheng?
- 16 L1 ocean
- 17 ocean right and what's in the ocean ... treasure and what's in the seawater
- 18 LL gold

Extract 1.4, below, contrasts quite markedly with Extract 1.3. Immediately obvious is the fact that learners have more interactional space and freedom in both what they say and when they say it. It is, in many respects, much closer to casual conversation because learners produce longer turns (in 53 and 55), and because the teacher's comments (in 54 and 56) are non-evaluative, relating more to the content of the message than the language used to express it. While we, as outsiders, are not privy to the precise meanings being exchanged here, it is apparent that the referential prompt question *do you believe in this kind of stuff* produced longer, freer responses by learners and resulted in a more equal exchange as might be found in a casual conversation.

Extract 1.4

- 49 T I agree do you do you believe in this kind of stuff? We talked about UFOs and stuff yesterday (2)
- 50 L no ...
- 51 L well maybe ...
- 52 T maybe no why not? (7)

- 53 L3 um I'm not a religious person and that's the thing I associate with religion and believe in supernaturals and things like that and believe in god's will and that's so far from me so no=
- 54 T I understand so and why maybe Monica? ...
- 55 L4 well I'm also not connected with religion but maybe also something exists but I erm am rather skeptical but maybe people who have experienced things maybe=
- 56 T uh huh and what about you [do you]

Repair

According to van Lier, 'apart from questioning, the activity which most characterizes language classrooms is correction of errors' (1988b: 276). He goes on to suggest that there are essentially two conflicting views of error correction, or repair, to use a less specific term which encompasses all types of teacher feedback:

One camp says that error correction should be avoided or eliminated altogether, since it raises the affective filter² and disrupts communication ... The other camp says that consistent error correction is necessary if we are to avoid the learner's interlanguage fossilizing into some form of pidgin. For adherents to each camp, the other camp engages in either fossilophobia or pidgin-breeding.

(*ibid.*)

One of the reasons for such polarity is the importance of maintaining face in the classroom. While repair between native and non-native adults outside the classroom might be deemed inappropriate, since it would result in a loss of face, there is absolutely no reason why errors should not be corrected in the L2 formal context. Indeed, as Seedhouse confirms, this is what learners want (1997: 571) 'learners appear to have grasped better than teachers and methodologists that, within the interactional organisation of the L2 classroom, making linguistic errors and having them corrected directly and overtly is not an embarrassing matter.'

For many teachers, repair, like other practices which prevail in language classrooms, is a ritual, something they 'do to learners' without really questioning their actions. This is not intended as a criticism, merely an observation. The consequences of such ritualistic behaviour, however, are far-reaching, since for many practitioners, the feedback move, where correction of errors typically occurs, is crucial to learning (Willis, 1992; Jarvis and Robinson, 1997). Taking this a little further, error correction may be direct or indirect, overt or covert; in short, teachers are open to many options – their split-second decisions in the rapid flow of a lesson may have consequences for the learning opportunities they present to

their learners. Although feedback is understandably perceived by most learners as evaluative (Allwright and Bailey, 1991), other researchers have posited a variable approach to feedback. Kasper (1986: 39), for example, notes that specific repair strategies are preferred or dispreferred according to the teacher's goal, contrasting 'language centred' with 'content centred' repair. Van Lier concludes that repair is 'closely related to the context of what is being done' (1988a: 211), the implication being that repair, like other aspects of classroom discourse, either is, or should be, related to pedagogic goals.

Extract 1.5 is included in order to illustrate what happens to the discourse and, more importantly, to learning opportunities, when pedagogic goals and teacher language do not coincide. (Some of the original transcription conventions have been retained to give a more precise representation of the interaction.) In the extract, the teacher is working with a group of eight pre-intermediate adult learners and her stated aim is 'to improve oral fluency'. Throughout the extract, repair is evidenced in almost every teacher turn, sometimes even overlapping with the learner's turn, indicated by square brackets. In turns 278 and 279, then, the teacher's contribution 'illegally' overlaps with that of the student, indicating an interruption. The most striking feature of this extract is the student's inability to really express herself owing to the teacher's persistent repair! It is only in 286 that she is really able to produce an extended turn, presumably something the teacher wanted throughout given her stated aim of improving oral fluency. It is not being suggested here that the teacher *deliberately* sets out to obstruct; merely, that when language use and pedagogic goals are at odds, as in Extract 1.5, opportunities for learning may be lost because the teacher's use of language actually gets in the way. This discussion will be advanced in Chapter 4.

Extract 1.5

- 273 T what about in Spain if you park your car illegally?
 274 L4 ... there are two possibilities
 275 T two [possibilities]
 276 L4 [one] is er I park my car ((1)) and
 277 T yes ... if I park ... my car ... illegally again Rosa
 278 L4 (**laughter**) if I park my car [illegally]
 279 T [illegally]
 280 L4 police stat policeman er give me give me
 281 T GIVES me
 282 L4 give me? a little small paper if er I can't pay the money
 283 T it's called a FINE remember a FINE yes?
 284 L4 or if if my car
 285 T is parked

- 286 L4 is parked illegally ... the policeman take my car and ... er ... go to the police station not police station it's a big place where where they have some [cars] they

Modifying speech to learners

A more detailed consideration of the relationship between input, interaction and language acquisition is presented in Chapter 2. Nonetheless, it is worth here briefly reviewing the work which has been done on modification of language by teachers. Lynch (1996: 57–8) suggests three reasons for the interest in language modification by teachers for learners. First, this is important because of the link between comprehension and progress in L2. If students do not *understand* the input they receive, it is unlikely that they will progress (cf. Krashen, 1985). Second, is the issue of the influence of teacher language on learner language. One of the most important activities performed by L2 teachers is to *model* target language for their learners; in many cases, this may be the only exposure to the language that learners receive. The third reason proposed by Lynch is the need for teachers to modify their speech owing to the difficulties experienced by learners in understanding their teachers. Without some simplification or reduction in speed of delivery, it is highly unlikely that students would understand what was being said to them.

An understanding of the ways in which second language teachers modify their speech to learners is clearly important to gaining greater insights into the interactional organization of the second language classroom and to helping teachers make better use of the strategies open to them. A number of studies have been conducted on teachers' speech modifications, these are summarized briefly here.

Pica, Young and Doughty's (1987) study indicates quite conclusively that learners who interact with their teacher gain higher scores in a listening comprehension test than learners who use a similar version but have no interaction with their teacher. Once again, the implication is that there is still a need for a greater understanding of the communication that takes place between teachers and learners; in particular, the ways in which teachers vary language use according to desired learning outcomes.

In a later study, Chaudron (1988) found that language teachers typically modify four aspects of their speech. In the first instance, vocabulary is simplified and idiomatic phrases are avoided. Second, grammar is simplified through the use of shorter, simpler utterances and increased use of present tense. Third, pronunciation is modified by the use of slower, clearer speech and by more widespread use of standard forms. Finally, Chaudron also found that teachers make increased use of gestures and facial expressions. Equally, listening passages in TESOL learning materials typically make similar simplifications. It is important too to note that the speech modifications identified by Chaudron in an L2 context compare very closely