AN ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT INVESTIGATING TEACHER TALKING TIME IN PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION STUDIES

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1. Introduction

What constitutes good or ideal language instruction is arguable, and to suggest that there is an ideal degree of teacher talking time epitomizes over-theorizing in teacher development. This can only add to the confusion. Over-generalized research in that area 'could result in an inappropriate and unobtainable model for the majority of language teachers' (Cullen 1998 : 181). Previous research into TTT in first and second language classrooms has revealed that although, theoretically, 'about 60% of the moves' constitute teacher talking time, 'these proportions reflect...only general averages' and there most certainly is a 'variability depending on class content, size of class or learner group' (Chaudron 1988 : 50). Chaudron also informs us that through research into first and second language classrooms we can observe that 'teachers dominate classroom speech, (though few) adequately rigorous contrasts can be made across teacher behaviours' (1988 : 50-54).

This report aims to combine various elements of important research traditions, 'employ those elements within the framework of case studies of individual learners, integrating the quantitative information made available...with the qualitative information of the case study approach' (Ellis 1985 : 144), in an attempt to improve upon my classroom practices. The project will investigate areas that need improving upon, and especially investigate and recognize patterns in my teaching where overly-excessive output may be evident and potentially counter-productive to learners' language acquisition.

After consideration of a hypothesis regarding teacher output and learners language acquisition, a methodology that contains both qualitative and quantitative elements will be used to investigate these issues. This will be followed by a discussion of the implications this research has had for my teaching, before concluding with some words of encouragement for other language instructors interested in examining and explaining this area of their teaching.

Before this project can be discussed, however, a review of the literature is necessary.

1.1 Review of the literature

According to Nunan (1992 : 18), action research can be interpreted as 'a descriptive case study of a particular classroom,' and does not necessarily have to be aimed at changing the general theory of language instruction. This however, is in contrast to the opinion of Kemmis and McTaggart (1988 cited in Nunan 1992 : 18), their opinion being that the purpose of the research is to 'change the system' and define it as being a 'teacher initiated classroom investigation which

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seeks to increase the teacher's understanding of classroom teaching and learning, and to bring about a change in classroom practices' (Gregory 1988 : Kemmis and Mc Taggart 1988 : cited in Richards and Lockhart 1996 : 12). Similar views held by Cohen and Manion (also cited in Nunan 1992), views that action research should be 'collaborative', and that 'the aim of action research (should be) to improve the current state of affairs within the educational context in which the research is being carried out', suggest that opinions regarding the use-ability of this type of research will continue to be redefined.

Types of research vary considerably and fall into distinguishable categories. Development in interaction and discourse analysis follows on from early evaluations of 'the psychometric tradition', and leads us to recent developments in sociologically and anthropologically influenced ethnological research and analysis. Although these studies have had their own individualistic development in the history of classroom research, 'each of the four traditions has been elaborated (and) modified often with combinations of them being adopted for (research purposes)' (Chaudron 1988 : 13).

Although analysis breeds new models and change in practices upon which to base our theories, as Nunan (1992) rightly adds, 'I know of few studies which have not resulted in change of some sort', a 'preoccupation with (areas such as) teacher talking time' (Cullen 1998 : 181) may only lead to more debates and theories that, in turn, propose solutions that do not significantly or necessarily improve classroom practices. At this stage, it might be worth considering who the real experts are in this kind of research : an objective observer, or the individual teachers themselves. Positive individual development and subjective change should be a key factor in classroom investigations. Based on the proposition, for example, that research conducted on 'even a single learner counts as action research', we can endeavor to develop our own ideas and develop our own skills in the classroom through personalized observation.

Ultimately, as Harmer suggests, 'Action research is...a series of procedures teachers can engage in, either because they wish to improve an aspect of their teaching, or because they wish to evaluate the success and/or appropriacy of certain activities or procedures' (2001 : 344/345), and, in a clear and classical sense outlined by Carr and Kemmis (1986), action research is indeed about improving, fundamentally, an individual's understanding and teaching practice. This contemporaneous issue is highlighted by Nunan commenting on the current philosophy of research into second language classrooms : 'In many cases practitioners are less concerned with generating generalisable knowledge than with solving pressing problems associated with their own workplace' (1992 : 19-20).

One definition of 'action' is 'a practical activity usually directed towards a particular aim', and one definition of 'research' is 'a study aimed at the discovery of facts'. These definitions interpret exactly, I regard subjectively, that which is being illustrated in this paper, and, after

analysing the numerous definitions by experts in the field juxtaposed with my own thinking, is as close a definition of 'Action Research' as I have thus far established.

1.2 Teacher Talking Time in Japanese ELT

As there have been relatively few notable writings or little outstanding research on the phenomenon of teacher talking time within the mass of private sector teaching occurring in Japan, it prompted me to conduct a study within that area of teaching. Teaching at elementary, junior and senior high school level in Japan, one notes that lessons are entirely teacher focused, and students have a proclivity to remain silent as the teacher delivers the lesson, only answering when called upon to do so. In countries such as Japan 'the teachers' role is traditionally one of transmitter of knowledge and value' (Cullen : 1998). Teacher fronted lessons are the norm in the Japanese education system, and the cognitive and psychological implications of this can be further observed in private language lessons, now a fundamental part of Japanese post-compulsory education.

With relevance to the post education system, Harmer touches upon individualistic learning and its benefits to students' language development. He claims that the individualization of students taking control of their 'learner autonomy' (2001 : 115) is of great importance, if not paramount to that individual's success, and how teachers determine what input their students receive becomes highly subjective. Conversation lessons are a fundamental part of the said industry, and careful structuring of input and, for example, the suitable selection of materials is of high importance. Teachers have to take responsibility for the amount and the quality of output there is in their classrooms. Advice and training can lead to improved standards of language output but as Cullen points out, '...attempts by the trainer to root out the phenomenon of (for example, excessive teacher talking time) have failed' (1998 : 179).

Measuring time spent talking in class will not necessarily result in clear models of how to improve the quality of English language lessons, and proposing an ideal level of TTT would be relatively futile, but improvements certainly can be made to the type of talk used. As is asserted by Cullen (1998), '...interest in teacher talk time has...shifted away from a concern with quantity towards a concern with quality' (1998 : 179). A similar view held by Underhill :

> Never mind all that is said about teacher talking time, we (should refer)...to teacher talking quality.

(cited in Arnold 1999 : 134)

I concur with Cullen's statement regarding 'teacher talk (as being) a potentially valuable source of input for the learner (and that), since this is essential for language acquisition (Krashen 1981, cited in Cullen 1998 : 179), getting teachers to reduce their teacher talking time would not necessarily be in the interests of the learner' (1998 : 179). And, as mentioned in brief previously, '...a preoccupation with reducing teacher talking time (in teacher fronted societies) would be unrealistic (1998).

What follows is an evaluation of my current teaching methodology.

2. Pre-research self-evaluation

(Table 1)

Amount of time I think I spend talking in class	0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
Amount of time I think I should spend talking in class	0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%

My self-evaluation is that I think my teacher talking time is slightly excessive. However, I do believe that I attempt, as often as certain constraints in the lesson allow i.e. when performing set tasks from the lesson materials, to make the majority of discourse with my students genuinely communicative. During explanations, introductions and informalities at the start of class, I attempt to limit the amount of 'teacher talk' in preference to the promotion of natural forms of communication. I do feel however that sometimes the choice of language in my lessons could be graded better to the level of my students and that my explanations could be more concise. In relation to my previous assertion, as pointed out by (Chaudron 1988), that teachers dominate language classrooms, and though I believe this is the case, I contest that my control over the lesson is detrimental to the students, and this once again highlights the contestable argument surrounding quality over quantity.

2.1 Areas of Enquiry
I expect to find explanations for my excessive teacher talking time in the following areas :

1. Through over-elaboration of explanations of grammar points, my talking time becomes excessive, and this also affects the rate and clarity of speech (see Appendix 4 E3).
2. As mentioned in the introduction of this report, there are cultural differences that exist between Japanese and western society in relation to speaking in class and that has an interesting effect on the length of pauses between utterances. Because of perceived uncomfortable periods of silence on my behalf, this sometimes affects time spent waiting between students reacting and answering and causes unnecessary interjections and, in turn, increases my talk time.
3. The majority of my training is from the corporate language school system in Japan where it is expected that teachers expose the students to as much of spoken English as possible. This causes a tendency to over-talk.
4. To keep lessons interesting, and to maintain the flow of the lessons, I feel that I do not give the students enough opportunity to ask questions. Though I am always happy to offer explanations, I am too quick to jump to the next section in the book, which limits the opportunities for students' questioning on items they may not have understood.

5. Though I feel that I am confident when teaching, I do not feel I give enough direction to my students and my instructions lack conciseness.

2.2 Expectations

Addressing the problems of the areas of enquiry above :

1. By observing myself teaching on camera, I will attempt to gain an accurate insight into how I operate as a teacher and will in turn be able to pin-point the areas which most need improvement, especially in areas such as accurately teaching grammar.
2. Through close analysis and data examination of my talk time, it is hoped that I will be able to evaluate the areas most in need of honing. For example, observing where I unnecessarily interject, I should be able to establish where I can give the students more time to talk.
3. A revision of the types of lessons chosen for individual students will hopefully result in more appropriately selected teaching materials. The current choice of materials reflects my teaching background, one of limited resources and focused PPP (Presentation Practice Production) lessons.
4. Close examination of my way of speaking and the type of language I use in class should contribute to helping me reassess the types of input I find necessary.
5. I hope to discover patterns in the amount of time I spend talking which relates to the kind of activity I am using in class.
6. I also hope, after close analysis of collected data, that I will be able to see how much time in class is teacher dominated, and will endeavor to devise better ways to involve students thus increasing the participant's opportunity to talk in class.

3. Method

For this action research project, which was produced over a limited time with a 'specific (goal) to achieve', as advocated by Nunan in (Holland and Shorthall 2001 : 15), I was interested in focusing on examples of how I acted with individual learners in specific parts of lessons, studying the collected data, observing excesses in talking time, looking at particular extracts from transcribed events, and then drawing conclusions as to how I could improve areas of my teaching. I focused on two differing students types in two classes of similar environments. At this stage I will further define my research as referred to by Holland and Shortall as a 'Participant Observation Study' (2001 : 10).

The students, both in the low-mid intermediate range of ability, are both managers of their respective companies. The lessons are both conducted on their premises. Each student differs greatly in personality and in learning strategy, and is motivated by markedly different reasons for studying (see learner types). 'Learners' beliefs are influenced by the social context of learning and can influence both their attitude toward the language itself as well as toward language theory in general' (Tumposky (1991), in Richards and Lockhart 1996 : 53).

To capture these two distinctively opposing styles of Japanese student, I attempted to record a naturalistic situation where the students would not be affected by the presence of a video camera. I attempted to create a situation which was a natural as possible replicating the usual lessons I conduct with the students. Videotaping lessons can be an uncomfortable experience for the teacher and the students, but by using a video camera 'I (hoped) to obtain the fullest account of the lesson(s)' (Richards and Lockhart 1996 : 11). The decision regarding the choice of using a video rather than an audio recording was also influenced by my interest in non-verbal behavior, particularly with reference to who is being addressed at any time. I also hoped to clear up any discrepancies that could occur when body language or gesture was being used to simulate language.

The transcribing process was lengthy as was the process of timing all of the verbal events (see Appendix 4 E5). Once the times were collected, I proceeded to calculate the overall amounts, differentiating between periods spent 'holding the floor' and the actual time spent making utterances. I then categorized isolated utterances, put them into groups, and calculated each group individually (see appendix 1 & 2 for examples). There were occasions where phrases would clash and combine in other categories. I established early on that if an utterance was part of an event such as 'let's move on, ok ?' the 'ok ?', part of the sentence would be considered a part of that procedural language and not an isolated event, and, therefore, not be counted as such. This inadvertently created categories such as 'error correction embedded in explanations' (refer to appendix 1 & 2 for the complete breakdown of categories). As there were a considerable number of timings, I was forced to verify my calculations several times. In comparison to some quantitative research (one considers, for example, the Flanders interaction analysis system of interval timings (1970), it certainly proved to be an extremely long-winded process. However, I felt confident that the data I was collecting was in fact a true representation of my talking time.

4. Learner types

Neither student's identity is mentioned in this report, and, to further define my research, I categorize it as 'ethical research' as mentioned by Swann, J. in Candlin and Mercer (2001 : 325). My 'ethical research' aimed to '(minimize)...inconvenience caused, and protect (the).....privacy' of the participants.

4.1 Student profile (1)
Name : Mrs. A
Age : 36
Profession : Manager of a small design agency in Tokyo

Mrs. A is a very focused, patient, and questioning student. She likes to take her time to fully understand what is being taught, and she tends to react very slowly and cautiously to each new item that is introduced. She mainly takes English lessons as a hobby but she sees the acquisition of English as being important for communication purposes in the future. She is a very keen

student who always does her homework thoroughly and is very attentive to the mistakes that she makes. She has a problem with basic errors, though her vocabulary is good and her grasp of grammar is improving gradually. Her output is limited, and she adopts 'coping strategies' (Swann, J. in Candlin and Mercer 2001 : 324) at times where questions would be better utilized. Her lessons reflect typical teacher led lessons, and she would rather be passively taught than outwardly practice. She is in the mould of most Japanese students that I have taught.

Despite a perceivably relaxed atmosphere, it is in Mrs. A's lessons that I feel most under pressure when I am teaching. Her persistence in eliciting clear cut explanations often makes me feel uncomfortable when I believe I have illustrated a point clearly. It is in these circumstances that I tend to start confusing matters by talking too much without thinking clearly how to redefine what I had previously said. In extreme circumstances some explanations have been rejected. Positively speaking, however, her responses are almost always in English, she uses her dictionary sparingly in favour of explanations from the teacher, and she almost always asks if she does not understand. She was very natural on the day of the recording, and showed no signs of being self-conscious about being filmed.

4.2 Student profile (2)
Name : Mr. B
Age : 52
Profession : Manager of a medium sized design agency in Tokyo

Mr. B is a very outgoing, confident and sociable person who is not afraid to experiment with language examples, often resulting in high levels of first language usage, and often not allowing for a great deal of thinking time on his behalf. My classroom relationship with him is very good, and we talk quite openly about many subjects.

He has a tendency to repetitively confirm his understanding (more often than not in Japanese), uses negation and affirmation, and fillers in a Japanese style, and, though I have tried many times to help him with this, he has not relinquished his bad habits. He is never overly pedantic about requesting complete explanations of grammar or vocabulary items ; instead, he often uses his dictionary to confirm exact meanings (supported by my own explanations), and despite this, is always happy to accept explanations I give him. He does his homework just before the lesson so it often has numerous items that need correcting. He was very natural on the day of the recording, and showed no signs of being self-conscious about being filmed.

5. Materials

'It can...be difficult to use a communicative approach if you are obliged to use resolutely uncommunicative materials ; but that is increasingly not the case' (Thompson 1996 : 14).

At the start of each student's course I endeavored to select communicative teaching materials

in an attempt to further the skills of the students in the areas of usage and communication. I chose firstly to use a book that I was fairly familiar with, and secondly, a book that seemed to regularly promote the use of communication as part of its syllabus. For both lessons I use the third edition of 'Side by Side' books 3 and 4 (Molinsky and Bliss 2003). The book covers a wide range of contemporary issues and the four micro skills. It is wide ranging in its grammatical content, and is favored highly by the lesson's participants. However, after using the book for some time, I have established that it is ultimately uncommunicative, as it only sparingly uses purely topic led communication tasks (see Appendix 3).

Considering the difficulties in making non-communicative materials more communicative, I attempt to talk in detail about each section, resisting 'teacher talk' whenever possible. Besides using the aforementioned book, I frequently use a communicative textbook to teach business group classes on a regular basis ; That text being : (Business Explorer 3. Knight and O'Neil. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press). I feel that this kind of 'communicative material' restricts teacher involvement and instead promotes the theory that learners should talk together as much as possible to improve their communicative skills. I have concluded, as mentioned before, that it is the teachers' responsibility to provide quality output during lessons, and that it is ultimately the teacher's responsibility to get as much out of the materials as possible too.

6. Results of lesson one : (Breakdown of teacher talking time)

Lesson timed at 60 minutes and 4 seconds (3,604 seconds)

(Table 1)

(TTT)	Time in seconds	Percentage of lesson
Teacher talking time total without pauses	1,597	44.3%
Teacher talking time including pauses	1,746	48.5%

(Table 1.2)

TOTAL TALKING TIME (no pauses)	1,597
Percentage of actual talk time during HTF	91.5% (1,597 is 91.5% of 1,746)

I had to distinguish regularly who was holding the floor in conversation and to be able to record that as teacher talking time. As there was a constant flow of conversation in both lessons, pauses in speech were minimal, hence the relative similarity in the amounts of discourse in the table above.

Moreover, as the previously explained 'holding the floor' model outlined in the method section, opportunities to answer the comprehension checks 'ok ?' (see appendix 4 E1/E2) were at

times too short for the student to interject with questions. This confirmed my suspicions (relating to my areas of enquiry) that my lessons are teacher fronted, and that I do not feel confident in giving explanations about grammar which I am not completely sure how to explain concisely.

The student's personality also should be taken into account when considering the amount of time I spent talking in this lesson. She is very quiet, and this often prompts me to push the lesson forward when long pauses or silences signal to me that I think it is time to press on.

6.1 Commentary on table 3 (see Appendix 1) : (An analysis of category types)

Considering the differences between the two lessons, a salient feature is that of error correction and giving explanations. Combining the times accumulates a total of 53.5% of taking time spent in this category in lesson one, supporting the assertion that my explanations are in fact at times excessive and/or needless. Compared to 28.7% in lesson two it seems, as suggested in the 'learner types' section, that I am not as comfortable giving explanations in these types of lessons.

Referential questions are also predominant in table 3. There is a noticeable difference between the use of referential questions in lesson one (13) compared to lesson two (1). This is task related as the student often has several pages of homework to check, and it is often on personal subjects.

There was a considerable amount of time demonstrating the student's sentences. This was predominant in the homework review section ; I would read the students sentence aloud and then correct it. It is in this type of classroom practice that I can identify a problem and rectify it immediately. Allowing the student to read aloud, and guiding the student in self-correction would prove to be more economic and promote the student's use of the L2.

7. Results of lesson two : (breakdown of teacher talking time)

Lesson timed at : 62 minutes 25 seconds (3,745 seconds)

(Table 2)

(TTT)	Time in seconds	Percentage of lesson
Teacher talking time total without pauses	1,505	40.2%
Teacher talking time including pauses	1,682	45%

(Table 2.1)

TOTAL TALKING TIME (no pauses)	40.2%
Percentage of actual talk time during HTF	89.5% (1,505 is 89.5% of 1,682)

Compared to lesson one, lesson two has a slightly lower percentage of teacher talking time. This is quite surprising as I considered this to be the more sociable lesson, and my expectations were that the proportions would be considerably higher. In comparison, there were a high number of utterances in lesson two, especially in short phrases i.e. giving instructions and affirmations and negations.

7.1 Commentary on table 4 (see Appendix 1) : (An analysis of category types)

A clearly dominant figure is that of 'isolated explanations' which suggests that there were a high amount of instances where the student needed points clarified ; clarifications made independent of error correction. Comparing the units of speech in lesson one (22) to lesson two (38), there is a significant difference. The difference between the overall time totals : lesson one (405 seconds) and lesson two (214 seconds) implies that I was more comfortable offering short explanations in lesson two, and often resorted to long-winded explanations in lesson one.

There were a high amount of instructions, though I think this is in proportion to the high amount of utterances in this lesson, as well as it being task related. Also task related is the high amount of 'demonstrating single words or phrases' compared to lesson one. These were most frequent in the first and second book tasks.

There is also a comparatively high amount of affirmation and negation which reflects the amount of discourse that was demonstrated by the student.

7.2 Comparison of tables

There is a definite pattern that emerges from tables (3) and (4). The categories of eliciting, confirmation checks, procedural language, and praise equate to a relatively similar amount in their respective categories. This verifies that the learner types have actually shaped the amount of time spent in other categories where the totals accumulated have not been completely dictated by the teacher.

8. Teaching analysis (What changes need to be made regarding my verbal input ?)

As was suggested in the introduction, the emphasis on teacher talking time has shifted towards a more quality driven interest. In considering the quantity and quality of my output, I have learnt that minor changes can be made to my teaching practices, and that, in turn, has in many ways justified the purpose of the analysis. I have also ascertained that an ideal or recommended amount of TTT can at best be speculated upon and then modeled for teachers to refer to generally. 'Teachers are estimated to talk between 60-75% of the time in...class' (Goodlad, 1984 noted by Crandall, in Arnold 1999 : 235), this however is a figure of relatively little use as it only refers to 'traditional class (settings)' (1999 : 235). My expectations were that I would find a high degree of TTT in one-to-one lessons ; this, however, has not been entirely the case. Considering the data, it seems that depending on the choice of calculation, whether in proportion

to ones own utterances or in proportion to the length of the lesson, talking time could be deemed either excessive or not.

I did expect to find that my talking time was excessive, and it was excessive in certain areas, and so I have implemented changes in those areas accordingly. The application of simple teaching techniques such as, getting students to read task instructions aloud, highlighting potentially difficult grammar and vocabulary and preparing concise explanations before lessons to counter long-winded explanations, and carefully selecting tasks and materials all contribute to a neater and more clearly presented classroom discourse.

9. Conclusion

As Nunan (1991) states clearly, 'determining what is 'excessive' (teacher talking time) will always be a matter of judgment' (1990 : 190). Experts in the field of EFL can argue out an ideal in the area of teacher talking time, but could it ever benefit teachers on a practical level？ I believe that the true experts are individual teachers themselves ; they are indeed experts in their own classrooms. Considering this, I believe that teachers should take more responsibility for judging what is required for improving their classroom practices, and focus subjectively on how to increase quality output.

The kind of research that I have undertaken has been time consuming, but I have learnt that by applying some of the research strategies mentioned in this report, I could improve my teaching, even if it was not necessarily related solely to the reduction of my talking time. Therefore, this kind of case study, applied with qualitative and quantitative data, ethically presented as two participant case studies, has proved to be successful, thus disputing the argument that action research is only of benefit if it changes the system on a wider scale.

I would encourage other teachers to do a similar kind of analysis. Analyses of ones own classroom behaviour can be daunting because change is inevitable, but the results, if looked at positively, can result in heightened awareness and immediate improvements. This can only be of benefit to us and our students. If this kind of research can be replicated and utilized by other practitioners, I also believe it can lead to a change in the wider teaching system, and, in effect, positive change will have been born empirically rather than purely theoretically.

Appendix 1

LESSON 1 : (Categories of discourse types)

(Table 3)

Discourse type	Description	Total amount of time spent talking.(seconds)	Units of speech	% of actual talk time (Without pauses)*
Referential questions	Questions the teacher doesn't know the answer to	36	13	2.2%
Display questions	Questions the teacher asks though the answer is already known. This includes section in book practicing Q&A	52	26	3.3%
Procedural questions	Questions used for classroom procedure, and not for the learning process	7	2	0.4%
Rhetorical questions	Questions not directed at anyone and not requiring an answer	2	1	0.1%
Answering questions	Teacher responds to student's questions	38	11	2.4%
Giving instructions	Instructing student in classroom procedures etc.	160	40	10%
Isolated Explanations	Explaining grammar points, how to use language functionally, areas for improvement etc.	405	22	25.4%
Isolated error correction	Responses to student error	152	35	9.5%
Error correction embedded in explanations	Explanations and error correction are combined in discourse without clear distinction.	297	12	18.6%
Repetition and clarification	Teacher repeats sentences, or requests student to repeat sentence.	14	6	0.9%
Demonstrating student's sentence	Teacher reads correct/incorrect student's sentence aloud	125	19	7.8%
Demonstrating single word/part phrase	Display of single word examples, or display of short, or part of a phrase	8	6	0.5%
Eliciting	Teaching elicits response from student	27	5	1.7%
Affirmation/Negation	Signaling to the student that their answer/response is either correct, incorrect, or needs improvement	37	37	2.3%
Comprehension checks	Clarifying students' understanding. i.e. 'Ok ?'	29	38	1.8%
Reading from book	Reading words, sentence, instructions, passages, examples, grammar points directly from the book	172	24	10.8%
Praise	Praising student's effort, encouraging	10	12	0.6%
Others	Including cues for moving on, reassurance, humour, inaudible words, discrepancies i.e. (Teacher/student speech clashes)	26	18	1.7%
		Total=1,597	Total=327	Total=100%

*percentages correct to one decimal point

Appendix 1 continued

LESSON 2 : (Categories of discourse types)

(Table 4)

Discourse type	Description	Total amount of time spent talking.(seconds)	Units of speech	% of actual talk time (without pauses)*
Referential questions	Questions the teacher doesn't know the answer to	1	1	0.1
Display questions	Question the teacher asks though the answer is already know	39	13	2.6
Procedural question	Questions used for classroom procedure, and not for the learning process	8	5	0.5
Rhetorical questions	Questions not directed at anyone and not requiring an answer	0	0	0
Answering questions	Teacher responds to student's questions	11	11	0.7
Giving instructions	Instructing student in classroom procedures etc.	254	79	16.9
Isolated Explanations	Explaining grammar points, how to use language functionally, areas for improvement etc.	214	38	14.2
Isolated error correction	Responses to student error	38	9	2.5
Error correction embedded in explanations	Explanations and error correction are combined in discourse without clear distinction	181	7	12.0
Repetition and clarification	Teacher repeats sentences, or requests student to repeat sentence	214	81	14.3
Demonstrating student's sentence	Teacher reads correct/incorrect student's sentence aloud	23	6	1.5
Demonstrating single word/short phrase	Display of single word examples, or display of short, or part of a phrase	76	53	5.0
Eliciting	Teaching elicits response from student	37	9	2.5
Affirmation/Negation	Signaling to the student that their answer/response is either correct, incorrect, or needs improvement	100	115	6.6
Comprehension checks	Clarifying students' understanding. i.e. 'Ok ?'	16	25	1.1
Reading from book	Reading words, sentence, instructions, passages, examples, grammar points directly from the book	200	50	13.3
Praise	Praising student's effort, encouraging	37	18	2.5
Others	Including, cues for moving on, reassurance, humour, inaudible discrepancies i.e. (Teacher/student speech clashes)	56	58	3.7
		Total＝1,505	Total＝578	Total＝100%

*percentages correct to one decimal point

Appendix 2

Lesson 1 (Activity types)

The two following tables represent a quantitative analysis of two sections of lesson 1. The two stages are the introduction and book task parts of the lesson respectively.

(Table 5)

Stage of lesson	Types of language	Frequency	Time (seconds)	Section time %
Introduction **Length : 455 seconds** Introduction to the lesson the student discusses what has occurred in life recently, teacher listens and corrects	Referential questions	6	16	3.5
	Answering questions	7	30	6.6
	Isolated Explanations	2	30	6.6
	Isolated error correction	3	8	1.8
	Error correction embedded in explanations	**2**	**66**	**14.5**
	Repetition and clarification	3	4	0.9
	Demonstrating student's sentence	1	14	3.1
	Eliciting	1	14	3.1
	Affirmation/Negation	3	5	1.1
	Comprehension checks	3	2	0.4
	Others	4	3	0.7
		Total = 35	Total = 192	Total = 42.3

Commentary on table (5)

Regarding the introduction to the lesson, it can be noted that there is a considerable amount of time spent on embedded error corrections. As the introduction to the lesson is usually reserved for casual speech i.e. 'catching up', I feel this is an area where I could have been less dominant and could have allowed the student to talk more. As there are only two instances of these, again it suggests that they were excessive.

(Table 5.1)

Stage of lesson	Types of language	Frequency	Time	Section time %
Book task (Pair work)	Referential questions	1	1	0.1
	Display questions	15	18	2.5
Length : 727 seconds	Giving instructions	14	46	6.3
	Isolated Explanations	**6**	**82**	**11.3**
	Isolated error correction	1	6	0.8
Working with teacher practicing examples of reported speech "He/she said..."	Error correction embedded in explanations	2	32	4.4
	Demonstrating single word/part phrase	1	3	0.4
	Affirmation/Negation	3	2	0.3
	Comprehension checks	7	6	0.8
	Reading from book	8	**73**	**10.0**
	Praise	5	5	0.7
	Others	3	3	0.4
		Total＝66	Total＝277	Total＝38.0

Commentary on table (5.1)

Predominantly, two categories of items are salient in table 3.1. As this was a reading task, there's no surprise that a high percentage of book work is present. Also, the fact that 11.3% of the time is spent giving explanations informs us that the student has required help understanding the isolated grammar point in question.

Lesson 2 (Activity types)

The two following tables represent a quantitative analysis of two sections of lesson 2. The two stages are the introduction and 2nd book task part of the lesson respectively.

(Table 6)

Stage of lesson	Types of language	Frequency	Time (seconds)	Section time %
Homework check	Display questions	1	1	0.2
	Procedural question	3	6	1.2
Length : 481 seconds	Answering questions	4	4	0.8
	Giving instructions	7	13	2.7
	Isolated Explanations	4	24	5.0
Introduction to the lesson the student discusses what has occurred in life recently, teacher listens and corrects	Isolated error correction	3	9	1.9
	Error correction embedded in explanations	4	126	26.2
	Repetition and clarification	1	12	2.5
	Demonstrating student's sentence	6	22	4.6
	Demonstrating single word/part phrase	6	11	2.3
	Affirmation/Negation	25	9	1.9
	Comprehension checks	2	1	0.2
	Praise	1	1	0.2
	Others	3	3	0.6
		Total＝70	Total＝242	Total＝50.3%

Commentary on table (6)

Embedded and isolated explanations feature highly in this table, as well as several affirmations and negations. As the student does his homework just before the lesson starts, and is therefore rushed, it was expected that these would be prevalent. There is also a noticeable degree of task related language. The majority of procedural questions are evident here, as well as there being several verbal demonstrations by the teacher of student's writen work.

(Table 6.1)

Stage of lesson	Types of language	Frequency	Time (seconds)	Section time %
2nd book task (Pair work)	Display questions	6	16	1.4
	Answering questions	2	3	0.3
	Giving instructions	**41**	**148**	**12.6**
Length : 1,173	Isolated Explanations	17	69	5.9
	Isolated error correction	3	15	1.3
Working with teacher practicing 'but' as a connector with intonation-practice	Error correction embedded in explanations	2	46	3.9
	Repetition and clarification	7	41	3.5
	Demonstrating single word/part phrase	9	12	1.0
	Affirmation/Negation	**49**	**56**	**4.8**
	Comprehension checks	12	12	1.0
	Reading from book	23	75	6.4
	Praise	8	21	1.8
	Others	21	25	2.1
		Total=200	Total=539	Total=46%

Commentary on table 6.1

There is a noticeably high amount of instructions given in this section of the lesson. The student was getting frustrated that he could not get the right emphasis with his intonation, and it's quite clear that he feels comfortable accepting my instructions on how to correct it. There were not many student questions which may account for the high degree of affirmations/negations that are in place of direct answers.

Appendix 3
Lesson 1 outline

(Table 7)

Lesson stage	Time (seconds)	% of lesson
Introduction	456	12.7
Homework Check	823	22.8
Book Task : (Pair work exercises practicing reported speech)	727	20.2
Giving Homework (1)	37	1.0
Reading Task/Follow-up	422	11.7
Reading Check-up	367	10.2
Book Task : (Choose correct answer from two examples)	209	5.8
Pronunciation Practice	221	6.1
Giving Homework (2)	35	1.0
Chapter Summary	144	4.0
Giving Homework	37	1.0
Practicing Idioms	126	3.5
	Total : 3,604 seconds	Total : 100%

Lesson 2 outline :

(Table 7.1)

Lesson stage	Time (seconds)	% of lesson
Introduction	18	0.5
Homework Check	481	12.8
Book Task (Practicing connectors using 'either' and 'neither')	1,358	36.3
Silent Reading	223	6.0
Reading Check-up	147	3.9
Job Interview Role-play	306	8.2
Book Task (Practicing connectors using 'but', intonation practice)	1,173	31.3
Giving Homework	39	1.0
	Total : 3,745 seconds	Total : 100%

Appendix 4
An explanation of 'holding/relinquishing the floor'

Videoing the lessons was especially important considering the flawed accuracy of a simple audio recording when trying to determine who is holding the floor during clashed utterances and non-verbal moments as dictated by body language.

In deciding who was maintaining the floor I looked for some very basic divisions in discourse. If, for example, a comprehension check was raised, i.e. (Ok ?), and the opportunity for a reply was given, then it was considered that the floor had been relinquished (see E1) Nunan states, 'in genuine communication, decisions about who says what to whom are up for grabs' (Nunan 1987 : 137, cited in Cullen 1998 : 180). As Cullen rightly points out, however, there certainly are communicative guidelines to follow in certain naturalistic scenarios i.e. business meetings (Cullen 1998 : 181).

With this contradiction in mind, I had to take into consideration the nature of the lessons that were being conducted. As the lessons are quite informal (though one could argue this could be dictated by learners' perceptions and subjective preference) the opportunity to speak would be open to both me and the students at any time. Being an adult class without an air of discipline attached, constraints were certainly less apparent, and in contrast in many respects to the type of teacher fronted lessons mentioned earlier.

Extracts From Lesson (1)

(E1) Example of the floor being 'held' and/or 'relinquished'

Teacher : And number five. Mrs. Tanaka teaches at a college. **(Floor relinquished)**
Mrs. A : Mrs. Tanaka.....false **(Floor relinquished)**
Teacher : Well, I thought false as well but...(Laughs)...well, she works at a school but she may work part time in college. But I'm being very, err, (Laughs) I'm being a little bit particular, so yeah, she works in a school, right ? **(No break in discourse despite 'CC'**)** She works in a school but maybe she works part time...
Mrs. A : Ehh ? **(STO)*** **(Floor not relinquished)**
Teacher : ...so, It's a very, it's a difficult question to answer. She's preparing her students for college but that's her full-time job. Maybe she's got a part-time job but...both maybe or false is ok. Maybe or false, both ok.   ...Alright ? **(Floor relinquished)**

*(*STO*)＝Student talking over teacher but doesn't effect flow of discourse.
**(*CC*)＝Confirmation check.
Refer to table (8) for full description of acronyms

(E2) Example of 'Holding the Floor' with 'Confirmation Checks'

(GE)

Teacher : So these negative sentences : He told me not to, so, 'don't' and 'not to', alright ?*
(Floor not relinquished)

(GI)

So, let's look at the first example :

(RFB)

I'm a little annoyed at the mailman.

How come ?

He told me to keep my dog in the house.

Why did he tell you that ?

He said that he was afraid to deliver my mail.

Ok ?* And, number two. **(GI)**
(Floor not relinquished)

*NB. Though the dialogue contains 'CC's' there was no time for the student to answer.

(E3) Example of unclear and overly excessive explanations

Mrs. A : I have a few...words...difficult words...prevent ?

Teacher : Ok. 'Prevent'. Err, that means to stop something from happening. So a good, err, example is to stop catching flu, get an injection. So to 'prevent' catching.....the flu, have an injection. Or, for example, to prevent sunburn, sunburn, put on sun-cream. Prevention, prevent, stop, yeah ? So, this is about getting broken into, so, w-what can we do to prevent our house from getting broken into ? What can we do to stop our house from getting broken in to ? Same meaning generally. Ok ?

Mrs. A : Reassured

Teacher : Hmm, reassured. So...'re' if 're' at the start of a word is again, reply, remember, y' know, so, 'reassure', I feel happily confident, I feel good about something. I'm 'assured'. It's ok, I feel ok, so, reassured is you confirm, it's a confirmation of feeling. Ok about something. So it says here : 'Mr. and Mrs. Part, Pratt, sorry, 'Mr. and Mrs. Pratt felt reassured after speaking with the police. Yeah ? So they felt comfortable about going away on holiday because they' ve gotten good advice. Ok ?* Anything else ?

*NB. Student not given an opportunity to ask for a clearer explanation

Extracts From Lesson (2)

(E4) Example of the floor being 'held' and/or 'relinquished'

Teacher : Ok, alright, good. So, let's have a look at the next section. Right, ok, so we're using connectors. Neither and either, ok ?* So, now, we're looking at 'but' as a connector, right ? So, you should ask them. So, I don't sing, but my sister does. Ok ?* She didn't know the answer, but I did.

(Floor relinquished)

Mr. B : **(SRS)** Student reads text from book aloud without instruction to do so. **(SCU)**

Teacher : He can play, je..., sorry, he can play chess but I can't, yeah ?* We're ready, but they aren't, ok ?* And, can you baby-sit for us tomorrow night ? No, I can't but my sister can, you should ask her.
(Floor relinquished)

(SCU)

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*No break in discourse despite confirmation check

(E5) Extract from lesson 2 depicting the complexity of discourse, transcribing, categorizing, and timing

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(RFB)
So **(pause 0.80)**, are you interested in seeing a movie tonight ?
No, I'm not, but Maria is, you should ask her, yeah ? **(pause 0.97)** **WP＝5.94 (2 lines)**

But Mari **(TIS)**...1.41 **(false start, repeating with student)**
...but Maria is...1.28 **(SR) (pause 1.22)**
...yeah 0.31 **(SR) (pause 1.16)** is, you should ask her 1.93 **(SR)** **WP＝6.97 (3 lines)**

Ask, ask <u>her **(SIT)**</u> **(SR) (pause 1.65)** her. So **(pause 1.35)** <u>her **(SIT)**</u>, **(SR) (pause 1.07)** but Maria is **(SR) (pause 3.13)** Maria is **(SR) (pause 1.65)** you...**(pause 0.65)** <u>you should ask her **(SIT)**</u> **(SR)** **(pause 2.10)** her **(SR) (pause 1.50)** just up...<u>her **(SIT)**</u> **(SR) (pause 0.85)** Yeah, that's it 0.69 '<u>her</u>'. **(SIT)**

WP＝29.78 (3 lines)

That's right. 0.50 **HTF＝43.19**

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*underlining denotes teacher/student utterances clashed

(Table 8) Acronym types from transcriptions

Acronym	Description	Acronym	Description
WP	Time Calculated Without Pauses	TIS	Teacher Imitates Students Utterance
HTF	Holding the Floor	GI	Giving Instructions
STO	Student Talks Over	GE	Giving Explanations
SIT	Student Imitates Teacher Utterance	RFB	Reading From Book
SCU	Student Confirms Understanding	CC	Confirmation Check
SRS	Student Reads Sentence Aloud	SR	Student Repeats

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