

**Teacher Talk in the Finnish Classrooms of English and  
the Potential of Communicative Discourse**

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Tutkimuskohteena on 'teacher talk', eli opettajan selkeytetty puhe, jota hän käyttää oppitunnilla. Tutkimuksessa keskitytään englanninkielen oppitunnilla tapahtuvaan opettajan ja oppilaan väliseen kommunikaatioon ja perehdytään opettajan käyttämiin kielellisiin keinoihin tukea vieraan kielen oppimista. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää millä tavoin opettaja kommunikoi oppilaiden kanssa ja miten opettaja voi puhettaan modifioimalla edesauttaa oppilaidensa oppimisprosessia.

Lähtökohtana tutkimukselle on alan tutkimuskirjallisuus sekä empiirinen tutkimus, jonka analyysimenetelmänä on käytetty diskurssianalyysiiä. Aineistona empiirisessä tutkimuksessa on käytetty kolmea englanninkielen oppituntia. Tutkimus keskittyy perinteiseen opetuksessa käytettävään kommunikaation tapaan, jonka lähtökohtana on kysymys-vastaus-palaute –ketju. Erityisesti ketjun kolmas lenkki, *palaute*, on tutkimuksen keskiössä, sekä opettajan kysymät kysymykset ja näiden käyttäminen vieraan kielen ymmärtämisen apuvälineenä.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että opettajat käyttivät selkeytettyä kieltä, joka tukee hyvin oppilaiden vieraan kielen oppimista: Opettajat käyttivät erilaisia kielellisiä keinoja auttaakseen oppilaitaan pysymään mukana keskustelussa, ja opettajien käyttämät kysymykset mahdollistivat aidon ajatustenvaihdon oppilaiden ja opettajan välillä. Tutkimuskirjallisuuden mukaan tämänkaltaisen aito kommunikaatio edistää tehokkaimmin vieraan kielen oppimista.

Tutkimuksen tuloksista voidaan päätellä, että opettajat pyrkivät aitoon vieraalla kielellä tapahtuvaan kommunikaatioon oppilaidensa kanssa, mikä kielenoppimisteorioiden mukaan tehokkaimmin tukee vieraan kielen omaksumista.

Avainsanat:

modified input

teacher talk

language acquisition

I-R-F exchange

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## 1. Introduction

The way language teachers speak their subject language to their pupils in a classroom setting differs significantly from the way they would speak in other contexts, for example when talking to a colleague or a native speaker of the language; this type of modified speech that teachers (not only language teachers, but teachers of any subject) use in the classroom is commonly known as teacher talk. However, there are many different views to what teacher talk exactly is and defining it is not as straightforward as it first appears. For example, it can be used simply to refer to the time when the teacher is speaking. Another way to outline what teacher talk is, is Chaudron's (1988) fairly broad definition: L2 (second language) teacher speech equals teacher talk. This, however, does not specify much. Hatch on the other hand (1992) defines teacher talk as a special register that has characteristics such as simple syntax, less pronominalization, simple noun phrases and a slower rate of speech, which gives the learner more processing time. Krashen's definition of teacher talk is along the same lines. He states that "teacher-talk is the classroom language that accompanies exercises, the language of explanations in second language and in some foreign language classrooms, and the language of classroom management" (Krashen, 1981: 121). This paper is going to use both Hatch's and Krashen's definitions of teacher talk as a starting point.

I became interested in teacher talk in the course of the teacher training I underwent in 2004-2005 in Tampere University. It was then that I was forced to think about what I say in front of the class and how I say it. I felt strangely awed at the power that language teachers – through their voice and speech- have over their class, and at the idea that if used skilfully, teacher talk has enormous potential in helping the pupils' language acquisition processes. I began to see what a powerful tool speech is for a language teacher. According to Sinclair and

Brazil (1982:4), a classroom teacher is a skilled verbal artist, able through little other than his conversation to control a large group of pupils, manage them, and take them systematically through a curriculum, all at the same time.

Language acquisition from the cognitive point of view states that human beings acquire language by making hypothesis about it, which they then test by forming utterances in the target language. Thus it follows that the input is viewed as the 'data base' for the hypotheses formulation, and that the quality and quantity of the language that the language acquirer is exposed to is not without significance to his success in acquiring the language (Håkansson, 1987). Language acquisition being the ultimate goal of teaching for language teachers, the kind of 'data base' the pupils are introduced with is highly significant and more attention should be directed to it. It is important because through his/her careful and meaningful language use the teacher can support pupils' language acquiring processes. On the other hand, as Musumeci (1996: 315) argues, the teacher can also hinder the pupils from producing language and communicating in a foreign language by being too helpful and 'filling in the gaps' in the pupils' speech when they struggle to find the suitable words in their attempts to communicate in a foreign language.

A close examination of teacher talk is therefore needed, because realising the possibilities of teacher talk is a great asset and it is worth investigating how teachers can use it best to their and their pupils benefit.

This pro gradu thesis contains seven chapters including bibliography and appendix. Chapter 2 of this thesis is dedicated to introducing the terms and basic concepts that are frequently used in the text. Each term is given a short description that explains the meaning and function of the term. This section can function as an index while reading the text: the definitions of the concepts can be looked up as one reads along.

Chapter 3 reviews some classroom-based research. A great deal of space has been dedicated to Stephen Krashen's views on second language acquisition (3.1) for the simple reason that it is such an influential work on second language acquisition. Krashen's 'Monitor Theory' and 'Input Hypothesis' form the root of this thesis. Sinclair and Coulthard's model for discourse analysis is reviewed in 3.2. The inclusion of Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) descriptive model was necessary because, albeit it is not the most recent, it is still the ultimate work in the field of classroom discourse. The knowledge of the basic elements of their model is crucial because these elements are part of the data analysis. Section 3.3 deals with communicativeness in language classrooms and it contains sections on negotiation of meaning, classroom interaction both in respect to how teachers' questions function in communication, and in respect to the functions of the teacher's follow-up move in standard teaching exchange. The section on communicativeness ends in the introduction of the importance of tone in discourse intonation.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to the study and it gives a detailed account on how the study was conducted and what the results of the study are. The results of the study are discussed in section 4.3. If one wishes to look at the data in more detail it can be viewed in the Appendix.

Chapter 5 (Conclusion) is the most relevant chapter to future researchers of teacher talk. The chapter contains ideas for further research and also some points on the pitfalls of research on teacher talk.

## 1.2 Research tasks

This pro gradu thesis consists of two parts. The first part is dedicated to discussion of teacher talk and related issues from a theoretical point of view, reviewing some of the research that has been conducted in the field, and explaining some of the basic concepts and terminology. The second part of the thesis consists of the empirical study.

The goal of this study is to investigate teacher talk as a form of modified input, and its role as facilitator in second language acquisition. This is realized by reviewing research literature in the fields of second language acquisition (SLA), discourse analysis and teacher talk, and by conducting an empirical study of teacher-student communication in second language (L2). The empirical study focuses on the nature of the initiation-response-follow-up (IRF) exchange, specifically the follow-up move and its two functions (evaluative and discursal roles of the F-move identified by Cullen (2002)). The goal was to find out what type of follow-up teachers gave to students, and whether that, according to research literature, supports negotiation of meaning and the formation of comprehensible input that will consequently affect positively to SLA. The I -move of the traditional IRF exchange is also analysed. This move is most often realized by a question, and as such it forms an important factor in the communicative value of the exchange: the type of question affects the type of answer that one needs to form to reply (see section 3.3.2). The study was done by conducting a form of discourse analysis. Teacher-student discussions that took place in L2 classrooms were recorded, transcribed and analysed.

## **2. Basic concepts and terminology**

In this section, some terms and basic concepts that occur in this thesis are introduced. A brief explanation is given of their use and meanings as they appear in this thesis. The terms are represented in random order. As a general note, it should be stated that the terms language teacher and language classroom will be used throughout this study, because much of what is stated is applicable to any language classroom. However, in this study I have focused exclusively on English teaching and English classrooms. The classroom context that I refer to throughout this thesis is an ESL classroom where English is taught as a part of school curriculum to Finnish learners. Other terminology that is frequently used throughout this paper is briefly explained in the following:

### IRF

Initiation – response – follow-up. A chain of exchanges originally identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). In the classroom context the ‘I’ represents the initiating move, such as a question by the teacher. The ‘R’ represents the response from a pupil or sometimes the whole class. The ‘F’ stands for follow-up, which refers to the comment from the teacher to the given answer. Originally the ‘F’ move was recognized as ‘feedback’, but the term ‘follow-up’, has since become the preferred term, due to the fact that ‘feedback’ describes the function of the move rather than the move itself (Sinclair and Brazil, 1982). The implication, according to Cullen (2002) is that the move may also serve other functions. The three moves are illustrated in the Example I below (Cullen, 2002:117):



T: What's the boy doing? (I)

S1: He's climbing a tree. (R)

T: That's right. He's climbing a tree. (F)

Although the IRF exchange is commonly known as the 'standard teaching exchange' and is used in much of classroom discourse, Walsh (2002) argues that it should not be used systematically. According to him, while the exchange is useful in certain contexts, it should not be the predominant discourse pattern because it "restricts learning opportunities and minimizes learner involvement" (Walsh, 2002:19).

### Modified input

Language that has been modified so that it is more comprehensible. Native speakers, for example, modify their language when talking to a non-native speaker to render their message more accessible and understandable. The language can be simpler in terms of the rate of speech, vocabulary, repetition, pronunciation, etc.

### Negotiation of meaning

Exchanges between interlocutors as they attempt to communicate and work toward mutual understanding.

### L2

Second language. In this paper, 'second language' refers to a language that is being acquired in addition to one's native, or mother tongue (L1). The term 'second' does not imply the order of languages acquired, but can also refer to the third or fourth acquired language.

According to Chaudron (1988), L2 instruction occurs in two contexts, the ‘second language’ context and the ‘foreign language’ context. This paper is concerned with the ‘foreign language’ context, in which the learner acquires the L2 when there is little natural use of the language in the surrounding society, and where the L2 is treated very much like any other school subject. Throughout this paper, the term L2 will refer to English.

### SLA

Second language acquisition. The process of acquiring a second language, L2.

### TL

Target language, i.e. the language that is being acquired.

### NS

Native speaker of any language.

### NNS

Non-native speaker of any language.

### Key

The choice associated with the onset syllable is referred to as key. Key is the choice associated with the first prominent syllable and it can be either *high*, *mid* or *low*.

### Proclaiming tone

Symbol *p*. Realized by ‘fall’ and ‘rise-fall’. The constituent that has the ‘fall’ is something freshly introduced into the conversation and not yet present in the ‘common ground’. If used interrogatively, proclaiming tone can be paraphrased as: ‘I don’t know the answer: please tell me’.

### Referring tone

Symbol *r*. Realized by ‘fall-rise’ and ‘rise’. The constituent that has a ‘fall-rise’ is already conversationally in play: it is what we are talking about and already present in the ‘common ground’. If used in an interrogative meaning, referring tone can be roughly interpreted as: ‘I think I know the answer; please tell me whether I am right’.

### Termination

The choice associated with the tonic syllable. Termination is the choice associated with the last prominent syllable.

### 3. Earlier studies

The focus of this chapter is to give the reader basic knowledge of the key research that has been conducted in the field of second language acquisition, discourse analysis and communication in language classrooms. The literature that is reviewed in this chapter has formed the basis for the study which is introduced in chapter 4.

How does one acquire a second language? And how can language teachers affect the process of second language acquisition through teacher talk? How can classroom discourse be studied? The area of second language acquisition (SLA) has been widely researched in the course of years, and several hypotheses have been drawn on the process of acquiring, or learning, a second language. There has also been much research on teacher talk and classroom interaction in the past twenty years. According to Nunan (1989), this interest reflects the importance of teacher talk in language teaching.

Some of the issues that have been the focus of research on teacher talk include:

- 1) The amount of teacher talking time in comparison to the time pupils speak during lessons. Indeed, the focus of research has been on the quantity rather than the quality of teacher talk (Walsh, 2002) and teachers have been criticized for their excessive talking time. According to Chaudron (1988), teachers make as many as 60% of the moves during lessons. Tsui's (1985) study showed the teacher dominance was even greater, over 80% of all speech!
- 2) The various types of modifications that are characteristic to teacher talk. The focus of investigation has slowly turned to the quality of teacher talk. Chaudron (1988:85) has

comprised a rough list of some of the types of modifications that have been studied in teacher talk:

1. Rate of speech appears to be slower.
2. Pauses, which may be evidence of the speaker planning more, are possibly more frequent and longer.
3. Pronunciation tends to be exaggerated and simplified.
4. Vocabulary use is more basic.
5. Degree of subordination is lower.
6. More declaratives and statements are used than questions.
7. Teachers may self-repeat more frequently.

In the following section, I will introduce some earlier studies made in the field of SLA and teacher talk. I will focus on research that is relevant to this thesis, and leave aside much of the research that is very general in nature. I will also briefly introduce Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) model of descriptive analysis for classroom discourse.

### **3.1 Krashen's 'Monitor Theory' and 'Input Hypothesis'**

Stephen D. Krashen is a noted researcher of SLA, and his research is well-known and has raised much discussion. Krashen has, for example, questioned the value of instruction in SLA, stating that the effects of instruction are limited, and that the classroom should function primarily to provide the acquirer with comprehensible target language input. Krashen's 'Monitor Theory' and 'Input Hypothesis' are introduced here to help illuminate the

theoretical framework of SLA, and to illustrate the connection between linguistic theory and classroom practise.

### **3.1.1 Monitor Theory**

Krashen's (1981) 'Monitor Theory' is based on the hypothesis that people have two systems for developing ability in second languages: a subconscious language acquisition system and a conscious language learning system. According to him, these systems are interrelated and work to support the other, but in the end the subconscious appears more important of the two.

Language learning is concerned with explicit teaching of rules and error correction. Language learning is a conscious activity (Krashen, 1981), and it can be viewed as being the outcome of 'traditional' teaching. Language acquisition, according to Krashen (1981), takes place when the acquirer is engaged in meaningful interaction in the target language, in other words when there is natural communication in the target language. In occasions like these, the emphasis is not on the form or correctness of the utterances, but on the message itself. Krashen states that there is a natural and fairly stable order of acquisition of structures in language acquisition. Acquirers need not know at which order the rules and structures of the language need to be acquired, and what rules they already possess, they only need to have a "feel for grammaticality" (Krashen, 1981: 2). Natural communication in the target language being the main issue, the modification of utterances by the native, or otherwise more fluent, speaker becomes necessary. Modified utterances help the language acquirer to understand the message when the proficiency in the target language is not fully developed (Snow and Ferguson, 1977). The importance of comprehensible input is therefore evident in acquiring a SLA.

“The fundamental claim of the Monitor Theory is that conscious learning is available to the performer only as a *Monitor*” (Krashen, 1981: 2). This means that utterances are first initiated by the unconscious acquired system, based on what we have picked up through communication. Formal knowledge of the language comes into play only afterwards to alter the output of the acquired system, sometimes even after the utterance is produced (Krashen, 1981).

### 3.1.2 Input Hypothesis

As mentioned earlier, comprehensible input is a necessary ingredient in the process of acquiring a second language. Based on this knowledge and the ‘Monitor Theory’, Krashen has formed a hypothesis called the ‘Input Hypothesis’ (Krashen, 1981). The hypothesis emphasizes the significance of modified speech, and consequently comprehensible input, in SLA. However, he does not make any definite statements about the validity of the hypothesis, only suggestions. The title of the chapter (Ch 9 in Krashen, 1981) is actually ‘The Theoretical Relevance of Simple Codes’, which indicates that the hypothesis had not yet been empirically tested.

Comprehensible input is something that is received by the SLA acquirer, i.e. a message understood, information received. This consequently means that prior to having had received by the language acquirer, the utterance has been modified, and delivered, by a more fluent speaker of the language. Krashen calls these different types of modified speech *simple codes*: “Simple codes may provide for the second language acquirer what ‘caretaker speech’ provides for the first language acquirer, comprehensible input with a low ‘affective filter’ ” (Krashen, 1981: 10). He focuses on three types of simple codes that language acquirers are

sure to come into contact with: “teacher-talk”, “foreigner-talk” and “interlanguage talk” (Krashen, 1981: 121), which he parallels to ‘caretaker speech’ based on their similar qualities and their shared purpose of being attempts to communicate.

Krashen (1981: 125) states that caretaker speech - i.e. speech directed to children acquiring their first language - is composed of shorter sentences, is more intelligible, contains more restricted vocabulary, and refers to a more restricted range of topics (strong sense of context, “here” and “there”) etc. In other words, caretaker speech contains such components that it is easy to understand and makes communication easier. Understanding language that is just a little beyond their current level of competence is actually the way that children progress. Indeed, Krashen (1981) argues that optimal input includes structures that are ‘just beyond’ the acquirer’s current level of competence. This leads to the curious conclusion that a native speaker is not necessarily the best teacher, because the native-like language is often too far from the pupils’ current level of competence and is therefore too difficult for language acquisition to take place.

The implication of the ‘input hypothesis’ is that the best language lessons are those in which true communication takes place. This requires the teacher to tune his/her language roughly to the level that is slightly beyond the pupils’ current level of competence. In addition to this, the focus of the lessons should be on communication rather than form. Also, according to Krashen (1981), the teacher talk that surrounds exercises may be of higher value than the exercises itself.



### 3.2 Discourse analysis: Sinclair and Coulthard

Sinclair and Coulthard are known linguists and pioneers in the field of discourse analysis. They have developed a system for a descriptive analysis of classroom discourse. They were not interested in classroom discourse in its own right, but chose that context because they thought they would find a more simple type of spoken discourse there, compared to the complexity of normal conversation.

We also wanted a situation where all participants were genuinely trying to communicate, and where potentially ambiguous utterances were likely to have one accepted meaning. ...In our effort to make things as simple as possible initially, we chose classroom situations in which the teacher was at the front of the class 'teaching', and therefore likely to be exerting the maximum amount of control over the structure of the discourse (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975: 6).

The starting point for their research sounds old-fashioned today, school practice and the roles of teacher and student having changed significantly since the 1970s in Britain where their research was conducted, as well as in Finland. The results of the study for the most part, however, are not out-dated. Sinclair and Coulthard's descriptive analysis for classroom discourse continues to influence present and future studies in the field.

I will now very briefly explain the main points of Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) model of analysis by focusing on the main terminology.

Elements of discourse structure simplified: Classroom discourse consists of transactions, which are made up of exchanges. There are two classes of exchange: *Boundary* and *Teaching* exchanges. The structure of exchanges is broken down into *moves*. *Framing* and *Focusing* moves realize boundary exchanges and *Opening*, *Answering* and *Follow-up* moves realize teaching exchanges.

*Frame* is a word that functions to indicate boundaries in the lesson. They indicate that the teacher has ended one stage of the lesson and another is about to begin. Teachers vary in the particular word they favour ('right', 'well', 'good', 'ok', 'now', or a stressed silence). Another boundary element is a *focusing* move, which functions to tell the class what is going to happen next. Focusing moves frequently, but not always, follow framing moves.

Classes of move	
Framing	Right ^
Focusing	Now, what is going to happen next is...

Teaching exchanges are the individual steps by which the lesson progresses. There are eleven sub-categories, but only three will be presented here. *Opening* moves cause others to participate in an exchange, and *Answering* moves are complementary to them. The function of the *Follow-up* move, according to Sinclair and Coulthard, is to let the pupil know how well he/she has performed.

Classes of move		Classes of act
Opening	Do you know what I mean by accent?	elicitation
Answering	It's the way you talk.	reply
Follow-up	They way we talk. This is a very broad comment.	accept evaluate

The lowest rank in discourse structure is an *act*. An act corresponds nearly to the grammatical unit *clause*, but it is not concerned with the formal properties of an item, but the functional properties. There are three major acts which realize opening moves and which occur frequently in classroom discourse:

*directive* -----→ (acknowledge) react

*informative* -----→ acknowledge

*elicitation* -----→ reply

(From Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975: 36)

*Directive* (e.g. ‘open your books’, ‘listen’) demands a non-linguistic response in the form of reacting to the command. *Informative* is an act whose function is to pass on ideas, facts etc. It requires an acknowledgement that one is listening. The one that is relevant in the scope of this study is *elicitation*. Most often *elicitation* requires a linguistic reply, but sometimes a nod or a raised hand will suffice. *Elicitation*, and more specifically, *teacher elicit*, commonly realizes the initiating move in the traditional IRF exchange. The response to an elicitation is the act *reply* which realizes the *Answering* move. According to Sinclair and Coulthard, *reply* is realized by a statement, a question, or a non-verbal surrogate such as a nod. Its function is to provide a linguistic response which is appropriate to the elicitation. Finally, the third class of move in teaching exchanges is the *Follow-up* move. This move has a three-term structure: pre-head, head, post-head, realized by the acts *accept*, *evaluate*, and *comment* respectively. According to Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:37), in *evaluate* the teacher presents his/her estimation of the pupil’s response and creates a basis for proceeding. Some argue (Chaudron, 1988, Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) that the primary role of the teacher is to evaluate student’s response, and give the class information of the wrongness or rightness of the reply.

### **3.3 Communicativeness in language classrooms**

In the past, classrooms have not been ideal surroundings in terms of learning communicative skills in L2. The stress has been on written language, and pupils' talk has been largely confined to chanting in chorus, or reciting, and answering questions that tested memory and attentiveness (Edwards and Westgate, 1987). In fact, Chaudron (1988:172) states that Mitchell et al.'s correlational study of EFL classrooms found a positive correlation between learner proficiency and "speaking", and low correlations with activities such as "imitation", "drill/exercise", and transposition (i.e., reading aloud or dictation). Also, the roles of teachers and pupils have been very strict and unequal in the past, resulting in severe constraints on the communicative options of the pupils.

Fortunately, things have changed and educators today have a new respect for talk in the classroom. The Finnish guidelines for teaching foreign languages (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2004) state that the aim of teaching foreign languages is to give the students readiness to function in various types of communicative situations. And, in addition to readiness to understand foreign cultures, its function is to teach the students that foreign language as means to communicate requires long-term and versatile communicative training. In fact, in recent years a much greater role has been attributed to interactive features of classroom behaviour, such as turn-taking, questioning and answering, negotiation of meaning, and feedback. According to Chaudron (1988), this type of interactive activity aids learners to gradually incorporate portions of sentences, lexical items, reproducing sounds, etc. in meaningful ways rather than in mechanical repetition or lengthy monologues. In the following subsections, I will discuss some issues that are of relevance to communication and interaction in ESL classrooms.

### 3.3.1 Negotiation of meaning and scaffolding

Under the assumption that interaction is an aid to language acquisition, any tool that helps to achieve communication between interlocutors is valuable in L2 classrooms. One such tool is a verbal exchange known as *negotiation of meaning*. Musumeci (1996: 287) argues that one important way in which input is made comprehensible is through negotiation, that is, through exchanges between learners and their interlocutors as they attempt to resolve communication breakdowns and to work toward mutual comprehension. One way to realize negotiation of meaning is through questions that act to signal that information has not been understood (Long and Sato, 1983) and thereby instigate adjustments to the message (see 3.3.2 for more).

Negotiation of meaning can be realized through a set of moves known as *scaffolding*. When students are unable to take a turn and communicate what they want to say, the teacher or other students use scaffolding to help the student along (Hatch, 1992: 95). Scaffolding derives from cognitive psychology and L1 research and was applied to L2 acquisition by Hatch, who sees it as a tool for negotiation of meaning. Teacher's questions, for example, serve as a kind of scaffold: they offer cues that help pupils arrive at a solution for problems (Hatch, 1992). Scaffolding, and ultimately negotiating meaning, can be exercised through modifying the verbal message. For example, if a question has not been understood, it can be modified and asked again in different words or with more "wait-time". Another possibility to modify one's question is to narrow the range of possible answers and in that way to give clues as to the expected answer. The teacher can also rephrase with an alternative, or "or-choice" questions: "What would you like to drink? [pause] Would you like coffee, tea, beer?" (Chaudron, 1988: 128).

Walsh (2002), however, warns against teachers being too helpful. Although their actions may be justified, for example there being other students who are waiting their turn to speak, or there is shortness of time and the need to move on with the lesson, nonetheless, the teacher should exercise patience. By helping too readily and too quickly, the teacher is doing the speaker a disservice as there is no negotiation of meaning, no need for clarification, no confirmation checks. There is a sense of the learner being ‘fed the lines’ instead of being allowed to formulate his/her responses.

According to Long and Sato (1983), questions can serve as means to signal speaking turns to the non-native speaker and thus generally to make conversation more salient. Therefore, “questions can make greater quantities of linguistic input comprehensible, and also offer a NNS interlocutor more speaking opportunities” (Long and Sato, 1983). I will discuss the importance of teachers’ questions as means to negotiate meaning in more depth in the following.

### **3.3.2 Classroom interaction: questions that teachers ask**

The growing concern over communication in classrooms has brought up the issue of the types of questions that teachers ask. This is significant because the types of questions asked consequently affect the types of answers that pupils can offer: whether pupils answer in one word or in more length, do they get to offer new information or recite old passages, do they use whole sentences, etc. Questions are significant also because they help to signal speaking turns in a conversation, and thus generally compel to take part. Further, according to Long and Sato (1983), certain types of questions are easier on the NNS than others. Varying the

type of question can therefore be effectively used to give the pupil more, or less, challenge in the formulation of an answer. For example, the formulation of a whole sentence answer requires much more skill than an answer that requires only one or few words. Also, the type of question affects the content of the answer, i.e. is the answer known to the teacher or is the pupil expected to bring in a completely new idea to the conversation.

Distinguishing between different types of questions is essential in understanding the dynamics of classroom discourse. The terms “closed” and “open” questions were introduced in an early study of L1 in classrooms (Barnes, 1969). Also, terms such as “general information” and “specific” have been used in context with questions. Chaudron (1988: 127) states that both of these distinctions separate questions according to whether they expect a particular, closed set of responses (e.g., “What’s your name?”, “Did you tidy up your room yet?”) or whether they leave open the nature of the response (e.g., “What did you do in school today?”). The growing concern over communication in classrooms has led Long and Sato (1983) to devise a further distinction to “display” and “referential” questions. This involves determining whether the teacher is asking for information which he/she already knows (display) or does not know (referential). Display questions tend to be closed questions that usually require only brief answers. Referential questions are ones that the teacher doesn’t know the answer to, and they can be either closed or open in nature. In effect, display questions are easier on the pupil and are used more at the beginner level whereas referential questions require more capability in TL to answer. According to Chaudron (1988), the supposition is that open/referential questions promote greater learner productivity, and will likely promote more meaningful communication between teacher and learner.

Long and Sato (1983) set out to study the nature of questions asked in the classroom. Their aim was to conduct an exploratory investigation of the forms and functions

of teachers' questions in ESL classrooms and to compare them with informal conversations between NS and NNS outside classrooms. Their data included 6 ESL lessons in addition to informal NS-NNS conversations. The method of their investigation was to code all questions in their corpus. To achieve this, they made some changes to the taxonomy of question functions by Kearsley (1976) and ended up with a following taxonomy of their own that was fine tuned to be used in the analysis of questions in classroom discourse specifically.

1. *Echoic*

- a. *Comprehension checks* (e.g., Alright?; OK?; Does everyone understand "polite"?)
- b. *Clarification requests* (e.g., What do you mean?; I don't understand; What?)
- c. *Confirmation checks* (e.g., S: Carefully → T: Carefully?; Did you say "he"?)

2. *Epistemic*

- a. *Referential* (e.g., Why didn't you do your homework?)
- b. *Display* (e.g., What's the opposite of "up" in English?)

3. *Expressive* (e.g., It's interesting the different pronunciations we have now, but isn't it?)

4. *Rhetorical*: Asked for effect only, no answer expected from listeners, answered by the speaker (e.g., Why did I do that? Because I...)

(From Long and Sato, 1983: 276)

*Comprehension checks* are any expressions by the NS designed to establish whether his/her preceding utterance has been understood by the interlocutor. *Confirmation checks* are questions that serve either to elicit confirmation that their user had heard and/or understood the previous speaker's utterance correctly or to dispel that belief. *Clarification requests* are any expressions by a NS designed to elicit clarification of the preceding interlocutor's preceding utterance. In other words, the use of *clarification requests* implies that the message has not been heard and/or understood by the hearer.



What Long and Sato found out was that in general, the speech of the teachers differed greatly from that of the NS-NNS conversation outside the classroom. Display questions dominate in the classroom setting but are virtually non-existent in informal NS-NNS conversation. Conversely, referential questions predominate outside classroom settings but were only 14% of questions asked by teachers. “This result suggests that, contrary to the recommendations of many writers on SL methodology, communicative use of the target language makes up only a minor part of typical classroom activities” (Long and Sato, 1983: 280). The effects of display and referential questions on learner’s TL production were studied by Brock (1986). The results showed that the learners responded with longer and more syntactically complex utterances to referential questions than to display questions. The supposition is that learners will gain much higher proficiency in TL if given the opportunity to produce more meaningfully in class.

Chaudron (1988) notes that comprehension checks, confirmation checks and clarification requests have the function of promoting more student negotiation and thus maintaining interaction. However, Chaudron (1988) adds that teacher’s questions in themselves do not promote learner TL production or other interaction, unless the teacher is aware of the pitfalls of too closed, too fast, or too vague questions, or worse, too many repetitions of the same non-understood question (See White and Lightbown’s (1984) study which focuses on the questioning patterns of teachers and their tendency to repeat their questions.). The focus of educators should therefore be on how teachers can form questions that are less vague and less restrictive and consequently rather enhance than limit the productivity of pupils’ answers (Chaudron 1988:126).

### **3.3.3 Classroom interaction: the follow-up move of the IRF exchange**

The IRF exchange, originally identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), is a significant part of classroom interaction. It is perhaps the most characteristic feature of communication between teacher and learner (see section 2. for brief summary of the term) and is commonly referred to as the ‘standard teaching exchange’. Typically, a question is the initiation of the IRF sequence and as such, they form the core of classroom communication by serving as means to engage learners’ attention, promote verbal responses, and evaluate learners’ progress. However, according to Chaudron (1988), there is considerable debate as to whether language teaching methodology requires this sort of interaction. Cullen (2002) has studied the IRF exchange in classroom discourse in some detail, focusing on the follow-up (‘F’) move in particular. He identifies two roles of the ‘F’ move: evaluative and discursal.

In natural conversations outside the classroom the F-move is unusual and does not occur automatically (e.g. Chaudron, 1988, Cullen, 2002). Teachers, nevertheless, are fully expected to follow up; evaluate or otherwise give feedback. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:51) argue that so important is feedback that if it does not occur we feel confident in saying that the teacher has deliberately withheld it for some strategic purpose. It is deviant to withhold feedback continually. Evaluative feedback can be given in the form of utterances such as ‘Good’, ‘No’, ‘Nearly’ or repeating the answer with a low rising intonation, for example (Cullen, 2002). Classroom context presents special circumstances of the teacher having superior knowledge and status results in an imbalance of expectations as to who provides feedback. “Aside from general instruction, the primary role of language teachers is often considered to be the provision of both error correction, a form of negative feedback, and positive sanctions or approval of learner’s production” (Chaudron, 1988:132).

Chaudron (1988: 145) argues that repetitions are among the most common types of corrective feedback. He continues that one of the most noted problems with corrective feedback is that repetition of a speaker's utterance can serve several functions, of either a negative (correcting) or a positive nature (agreeing, appreciating). There are a number of other problems, for example which errors to correct and which not. Teachers have to choose either to interrupt learner communication in order to correct mistakes, or let errors pass to make communication more natural. Other problems include, for example, the inconsistency in correcting mistakes in general, and inconsistency in terms of whose mistakes to correct and whose to not. Also, the time that is available for tackling student errors is limited, and sometimes teachers simply drop correcting errors 'midway' to move on with the lesson.

The discursal role of the F-move focuses more on the content of the utterance (i.e. student answer) than on form, which was the case in the evaluative function of the move. The emphasis is therefore on communicative aims rather than grammatical correctness. The way for teachers to realize this in actual classroom interaction is for example to ask more open-ended, referential questions to get more personal responses from the students. These responses the teacher can rephrase and elaborate on, and then 'feed' to the class discussion to encourage further contributions (Cullen, 2002).

According to Cullen (2002), both functions of the follow-up move support learning. The skill that teachers need to promote SLA is to keep the two in balance. If the follow-up moves are used only in the evaluative way, the result is that no meaningful dialogue will form between teacher and pupils. If the teacher focuses only discursal functions of follow-up, pupils do not learn to notice their errors or self-correct them. The skill of using the F-move equally in terms of its evaluative and discursal roles, is therefore one of significance.

### 3.3.4 Communicative value of tone in discourse intonation

As mentioned in the previous section, there is a noted problem with properly uncoding the follow-up move. As Chaudron (1988) states, one of the biggest problems with feedback is that if it is realized by repeating the previous speaker's utterance, it can serve two meanings. Depending on the tone of the repeated utterance, it can have either a positive or a negative function.

T What is the animal on page eleven?

S A cow.

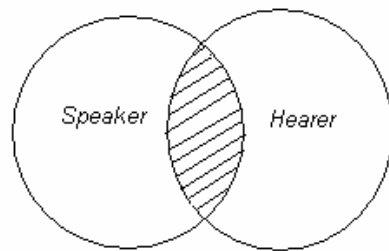
T // ↗ a cow // (paraphrase: No. Try again.)

// ↘ a cow // (paraphrase: Yes. The animal on page eleven is a cow.)

In order to accurately identify the functions of the follow-up move, I had to gain more information of intonation and its significance in communication. For this purpose, I read literature on discourse intonation and communication. *The communicative value of Intonation in English* by David Brazil (1997) was the one I gained most from. I will now briefly introduce parts of Brazil's study and introduce some of the basic functions tone and its communicative value. The work of Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980) is also referred to in this section.

Brazil's initial question is: 'What are the consequences of choosing tone x *in preference to another?*' He introduces five tones: the 'fall', the 'rise', the 'fall-rise', the 'rise-fall' and the 'level' tones and moves on to investigate the communicative significance of choosing one tone over the other. The latter will not be discussed here, for it is not relevant to this analysis.

The context of the conversation and the speaker-hearer convergence are significant factors in making a distinction between the ‘fall’ and the ‘fall-rise’ (Brazil, 1997:70).



The intersecting circles represent the word views of the speaker and the hearer at the moment of utterance of a tone unit. The shaded area represents the ‘common ground’ that the speaker and hearer share. According to Brazil (1997:68), we may informally say that the constituent that has a ‘fall-rise’ is already in play, conversationally: it is what we are talking about and already present in the ‘common ground’. The constituent that has the ‘fall’ is something freshly introduced into the conversation. Thus, he refers to the ‘fall-rise’ tone as a referring tone (*r*) and the ‘fall’ tone as a proclaiming tone (*p*). Brazil refers to this situation as P/R opposition.

(1) // *r* MARY BROWN // *p* is a TEACHer //

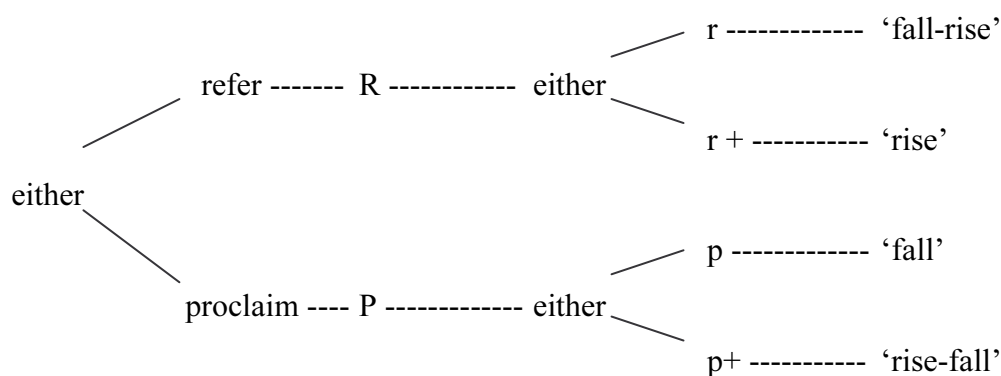
Paraphrase: ‘Talking of Mary Brown, she is a teacher.’

(2) // *p* MARY BROWN // *r* is a TEACHer //

Paraphrase: ‘Talking of teachers, Mary Brown’s one.’ (Brazil 1997:68)

In addition to the abovementioned P/R opposition, Brazil (1997) also studied the significance of tone in respect to dominance and control. In order to discuss this any further, it

is first necessary to introduce two more tones: the 'rise' and the 'rise-fall'. The speaker has other means of marking a tone unit as proclaiming than by choosing a 'fall' as he/she does other means of marking a tone unit as referring than by choosing a 'fall-rise'. These other options are the tones 'rise' and 'rise-fall' (Brazil, 1997:82). These options are represented diagrammatically as follows:



(Brazil 1997:83)

The context of interaction was discussed in the matter of the P/R opposition, it being the ultimate factor in reference to what is considered new information in the conversation and what is news to the hearer, and thus affecting the tone choices. Another issue concerning the importance of the context of interaction is a shared understanding of which participant is in control of the discourse at a given time (Brazil, 1997: 84). Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980) state that in all situations there are social rules which determine who speaks when and to whom. A typical example of a situation where these types of rules occur is a conventional school lesson where the teacher is the occupant of the dominant role. For instance, according to Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980: 53), it is part of a teacher's function to follow up and evaluate pupils' answers; pupils are not expected to reciprocate. According to Brazil (1997: 85), the dominant participant has the choice of either a *p* or *p+* tone when he/she wishes to proclaim, and of either *r* or *r+* tone when he/she wishes to refer. The non-dominant

interlocutor does not have the same choices. For example, if a non-dominant speaker uses the + option, it can signal rudeness. This can be illustrated by looking at the following pair of utterances:

(3) // *r* the FIGure on the LEFT // *p* is a TRIangle //

(4) // *r+* the FIGure on the LEFT // *p* is a TRIangle //

(Brazil, 1997: 85)

Brazil states that while it is easy to imagine a teacher producing either of these in the course of some piece of exposition, it is unlikely that a pupil would produce the second in response to the teacher's question. The *r+* option would be considered cheeky. According to Brazil (1997: 87), the local attributes that are most easily ascribed to some uses of *r+* tone in common-sense language are 'forcefulness' and 'emphasis'. Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980) follow in these same lines, and state that the person who takes on the dominant role in the conversation is in position to "remind" (i.e. to use the *r+* tone) whereas the non-dominant participant does not have that freedom without sounding rude or cheeky.

One issue that needs to be discussed in respect to tone and communication is the use of proclaiming and referring tones in connection to the interrogative function. Brazil says: "certain declarative-mood items function as questions because of the prevailing state of speaker/hearer understanding, and that they serve to elicit a response which, if forthcoming, will remove some kind of uncertainty from the mind of the speaker" (Brazil, 1997: 102).

- (5) // *r* i preFER that one // (but I can't afford it)  
 (6) // *r+* you preFER THAT one // (Is that what you are saying?)  
 (7) // *r* john preFERS that one // (He told me so)  
 (8) // *r+* JOHN preFERS that one // (Is that what you are saying?)  
 (Brazil, 1997:101)

Examples (5) and (7) represent a context of interaction where the content of information is common ground. Examples (6) and (8) similarly present their matter as if it were already negotiated. Here, however, the speaker is asking the hearer to confirm or deny the validity of what was said. A proper response is either *yes* or *no*.

- (9) Speaker A: // *p* I saw him in OXford street //  
 Speaker B: // *r* you saw him in OXford street //  
 Speaker A: // *p* YES //

According to Brazil, when a speaker echoes the lexis and grammar of an utterance like speaker B does in (9), the appropriate paraphrase is ‘Am I right in thinking you said (and meant)...’ This can be interpreted in terms of surprise: ‘Have I heard (understood) you correctly?’ and usually indicates that what has been heard is in some way contrary to expectations. An alternate version that lacks the element of surprise would be:

- (10) // *p* you saw him in OXford street //  
 (Brazil, 1997: 103)

The interpretation of the last two examples is complicated by the fact that both referring and proclaiming tones combine with high and mid termination. According to Brazil,



there is the choice of referring tone in the echo which signifies uncertainty whether the speaker had heard correctly. But there is also a simultaneous choice of proclaiming tone and high termination which can sometimes justify a very similar local interpretation:

OXford street

- (11) // *p* you SAW him in //  
 (= ‘Is that, or is it not, what you said (meant)?’)

Probably the highest degree of incredulity attaches, however, to the combination of high termination *and* referring tone. Tone and termination choices can best be summarized as follows:

	mid termination	high termination
referring tone	1 This is what I infer, or think I heard. Please confirm that I am right.	2 This is what I infer, or think I heard. Please tell me whether I am right or not.
proclaiming tone	3 Can I infer, or did you say (mean), this or something else? Please confirm that it was <i>this</i> .	4 Can I infer, or did you say (mean), this or something else? Please tell me whether <i>this</i> is right or not.

(Brazil, 1997:104)

Pitch level choices are also a factor in communication in respect to intonation.

The following example is from Halliday (1970), and it shows the significance of pitch level.

With falling tone:

- mid // 1. it's just starting to rain // (unemotional, reporting a fact)  
 high // 1+ it's just starting to rain // (excited, 'hurry up and come inside')  
 low // -1 it's just starting to rain // (calm, 'I knew it would')

Finally, one more example to be introduced here in respect to the follow-up move and its functions, is what Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980) refer to as *termination*.

<i>high</i>	WHY would you want to be	
<i>mid</i> // T: p		<u>STRONG</u> // P: p to
<i>low</i>		

<i>high</i>	<u>MUSC</u> les	MAKE <u>MUSC</u> les
<i>mid</i> // MAKE	// T: p to	// r+ <u>YES</u> //
<i>low</i>		

(Brazil, Coulthard and Johns, 1980:78)

According to Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980), pupils very often *request* an evaluative, high key follow-up move by ending their answer with high termination. “Only when the pupil is confident does he/she end with mid-termination requesting agreement; while low termination virtually never occurs and when it does is heard as ‘cheeky’ or ‘sullen’ because it suggests that the exchange has ended, evaluation is superfluous and thus the pointlessness of the question” (Brazil, Coulthard and Johns, 1980:78).

As far as intonation is concerned, the literature I familiarized myself with had much overlapping information. This is a consequence of David Brazil’s influence and hard work in the field of intonation, him being the author or co-author of all the publications I read on intonation. For example, the *Discourse Intonation and Language Teaching* by Brazil, Coulthard and Johns (1980) was also used as materials in this study, although, it being a previous study, it contained much of the same information as the 1997 study by Brazil.

#### **4. The study**

The aim of the study was to investigate teachers' use of the verbal tools that aim to true communication, and which consequently help the process of SLA. These tools include the follow-up move and the use of referential and echoic questions. These are the main focus of this study and much of the findings are based on the occurrence of these two phenomena. Negotiation of meaning and scaffolding are also tools for successful communication, but as they are often realized by the above mentioned questions of referential or echoic nature, the occurrence of negotiation or scaffolding in the data has not been calculated separately. In stead, their role in the data has been discussed in a separate paragraph at the end of section 4.4.

The form of the data that was to be used for this analysis was clear from the beginning. The intention was to record ESL lessons and analyze them from the perspective of my research goals. For the most part, this would include analyzing the follow-up move and the question types that teachers use. The goal was to audio-record as many lessons as possible, but it became clear in the early stages of the process that the amount of time and effort that goes into transcribing the lessons would be so immense that the data would have to be limited to four or five lesson extracts.

The primary sources of information for this study are audio-recordings from three L2 English lessons. As secondary source I have used literature written on previous research made in the fields of teacher talk (e.g. Cullen, 2002; Håkansson, 1987; Sinclair and Brazil, 1982), discourse analysis (e.g. Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), second language acquisition (e.g. Krashen, 1981) and discourse intonation (e.g. Brazil, 1997).

#### **4.1 Collecting the data**

The collection of data took place in February and March 2006. Five experienced L2 English teachers were approached via e-mail to take part in the study. Preliminary inquiries were made as early as December 2005, followed by a second, more detailed, message concerning the practical arrangements for the study in January 2006. Due to some difficulties in scheduling the lessons to be taped, the data was not collected until the end of February and early March.

From the five teachers that were contacted initially, three returned the message agreeing to the request of taping their lesson, one respectfully declined, while one did not respond at all. The teachers that agreed to take part in the study were a mix of upper secondary school teachers and teachers from the upper levels of comprehensive school. They all represent different schools in the Tampere area. The amount of data was quite small, but for these purposes it felt sufficient and plenty versatile regardless of its limited size.

The teachers were asked if one of their typical 45-minute lessons could be taped for the purposes of the study. The aim of the study was only briefly and vaguely explained in order to avoid too much interference to the teachers' conduct during the lessons. The teachers were informed of the title of the study. A short explanation of the direction of the study was also given, in addition to a mention of the method of analysis, which was stated as being some form of discourse analysis.

The guidelines that the teachers received were quite simple. The only requirement for the lesson that was to be taped was that it had to include some type of teacher-fronted activity with examples of teacher-learner interaction. In practice this was realized in

discussions between teacher and pupils before entering a new text in the course book, or in other similar situations where the teacher introduced a new topic for the class.

The equipment that was used in collecting the data was very subtle and undetectable, so the class did not get disturbed by the fact that they were being recorded. A mini-disk device and a small microphone were placed out of sight somewhere in the classroom, behind curtains or on top of a shelf, for example. The disturbing effect of the recording was minimized also by the fact that the teachers didn't have to work the equipment, but the researcher herself took care of all the arrangements concerning the technical side of things. The researcher was also not present in the classroom during the lessons, but left in good time before the pupils entered the room and came back for the equipment after the lesson had ended and the pupils had left.

The data, a total of 135 minutes of speech, was carefully listened to, after which those sections that were relevant to the study were transcribed (see Appendix for these extracts).

## **4.2 Materials and methods**

For the analysis, a model for classroom discourse analysis needed to be found that would answer the questions I had set out to solve. I wanted to study teacher talk as a form of modified input and its role as facilitator in SLA. In order to achieve this, I needed to analyze the IRF exchange and particularly the F-move and its two roles (evaluative and discursive) and the I-move (the questions that teachers ask). Both these two phenomena are a factor in determining how communicative classroom discourse is.

As for the analysis of the F-move, it turned out to be relatively challenging to find a model for analysis that would suit my purposes fully, and I was not able to find a one model of analysis that would fit my requirements. Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) descriptive model for classroom discourse felt like a safe choice, but on closer examination it turned out to be too detailed. Also, being the pioneer work in the field, the model is a bit confusing and somewhat unrefined, not to mention old-fashioned in terms of its view on the roles of teacher and pupil. Therefore I turned my attention to Sinclair and Brazil (1982), whose linguistic analysis of discourse is developed from Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) work. Their approach seemed easier to comprehend, but I felt unsure whether the model was adequate for my purposes. In their introductory paragraph, Sinclair and Brazil state that the focus of their analysis of teacher talk is to provide a clear and simple account of teacher talk for the widest possible audience, and although they feel they can present the main outlines of teacher talk with confidence, "any extended real instance is fraught with problems and ambiguities" (Sinclair and Brazil, 1982:2). As I had not found one model I could use directly, I concluded that the best choice would be to adapt, in other words simplify, the model by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) in the hopes that this way I would have a model that is comprehensive enough without being too detailed.

According to Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), *Teaching* exchanges are divided into 11 exchange types. The one exchange type that is relevant in the scope of this study is *Teacher Elicit* which includes all exchanges that aim to obtain verbal contributions from pupils. The discourse structure that is typical to teacher elicit is IRF, which is realized by the moves *Opening*, *Answering* and *Follow-up*. The *Follow-up* move has a three-term structure, pre-head, head, post-head, realized by the acts *accept*, *evaluate* and *comment* respectively.

The following explanations for these acts are from Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and the accompanying examples are from the data.

*Accept*: Realized by ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘good’, ‘fine’ and repetition of pupil’s reply, all with neutral low fall intonation. Its function is to indicate that the teacher has heard or seen and that the reply was appropriate.

T: What’s his (captain’s) occupation?

S: Pilot.

T: // *p* HE’s a PI lot //

(From Text 1)

*Evaluate*: Realized by phrases like ‘good’ or ‘interesting’, commenting on the quality of the reply, also by ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘good’, ‘fine’ with a high fall intonation, and repetition of the pupil’s reply with either high fall (positive) or rise of any kind (negative evaluation).

T: Should it be warm or should it be cold?

S: Warm.

T: // *p* YEAH // // *p* WARM milk //

(From Text 2)

*Comment*: Realized by a statement and tag question. It is subordinate to the head of the move and its function is to exemplify, expand, justify, and provide additional information.

S: Well, I read when I have time and... and I actually never write.

T: Mmhmm.

S: And my favourite books are Harry Potter.. (inaudible)

T: You like Harry Potter. Do you read .. read them in English?

S: Mmhm.. yeah.

T: That's great. That's wonderful.

(From Text 3)

However, Sinclair and Coulthard do not recognize the discursive function of the F-move at all. They state that the function of the follow-up move is to let the pupil know how well he/she has performed (1975: 48). In other words, they see only one function for the follow-up move; an evaluative one. They go as far as to state that “the act evaluate is seen by all participants as a compulsory element” (1975: 49).

As the focus of my study was specifically the F-move and (both) its functions, I needed to find a model of analysis that would answer all my questions in respect to the follow-up move: How much is there of evaluative follow-up, and of these evaluative acts, what is the ratio of positive and negative feedback? Also, how much discursal follow-up is there in the data? How is discursal follow-up realized? Again, I found I had to modify the model of analysis to include the discursive role of F-move. The end result was that I took some parts of Sinclair and Coulthard's descriptive model, and added some points that Cullen (2002) had in his study, namely the different strategies teachers use for different functions of the F-move. Now I had a chart that included all the functions of the F-move, and which would, ultimately, answer my questions about the extent of evaluative and discursive follow-up.



<b>Functions of the F-move</b>	
Accept	
Evaluate	
	positive
	negative
Discuss	
	reformulation
	elaboration
	comment
	repetition to express surprise or interest (high rise)

In addition to this, some focus was directed to the types of questions that teachers asked. This was conducted by using taxonomy of question functions adapted from Long and Sato (1983) and Kearsley (1976).

<b>Function of teachers' questions</b>
Echoic
Comprehension checks
Clarification requests
Confirmation checks
Epistemic
Referential
Display
Expressive
Rhetorical
Social control

Both the function of the F-move and the question type are factors in determining how communicative the discourse is and in what degree meanings are negotiated.

Intonation turned out to be a significant part of the analysis (distinguishing feature in many respects) and proved challenging at that. For example, a repetition of a students reply by a teacher can be interpreted as either a statement or a question depending on the intonation

pattern. This is significant because it changes the nature of the exchange completely. If there is rising intonation, the implication is that the teacher is asking for clarification, whereas low intonation implies that the answer has simply been repeated to make it more audible for other students in the classroom, for example. The following exchange exemplifies the choice of rising intonation and the implication is that the teacher is asking for clarification.

S: // *p* HELIcopter is better //

T: // *r+* HELIcopter is BETter // (Is that what you are saying? Explain, please.)

(From Text 1, see Appendix)

Should the teacher's utterance be in neutral low fall intonation, the implication would be that the teacher accepts the student's answer of a helicopter being better and agrees with what was said. In that scenario, the utterance takes the form of a statement.

In addition to being a factor in the analysis of teachers' questions, intonation was a crucial element in analyzing the F-move as well. It is the distinguishing feature that differentiates *accept*, *evaluate* and *discuss* in those cases where the student reply has been repeated by the teacher. For example, rising intonation implies negative feedback and functions as a form of error correction, whereas low intonation suggests positive feedback and simply repeating in order to keep the conversation fluent. The example below is taken from Text 1 and it represents a situation where the teacher is echoing the student's reply in order to keep the conversation going.

T: Is it state owned or is it private?

S: It's private...

T: Mmhmm.

S: ..and that's why it's so expensive.

T: *p* // and THAT's why it's so expensive //

(From Text 1, see Appendix)

### 4.3 Some problematic issues with the analysis

The analysis of the data I had collected proved to be more challenging than I had anticipated. As for the analysis of the questions that teachers asked, there were many dilemmas. To begin with, the distinction between *clarification requests* and *confirmation checks* proved tricky. I found Long and Sato's (1983) explanations inadequate to my purposes. Also, the terms 'Yes/No questions' and 'open-closed questions' felt awkward and I kept mixing them up with display questions. In the end I discarded the entire Yes/No dyad, as well as the open-closed division, and focused solely on *display* and *referential* questions as they are explained by Long and Sato (1983).

Also, the question of what does the teacher actually know, in respect to whether she is asking a rhetorical question or an epistemic one proved challenging. According to my literary sources, this can be distinguished by the length of wait-time. If the wait-time is very short, a question has been a rhetoric one and supposedly no reply is required. In contrast, if there is a distinct pause immediately after a question, an answer is expected. However, this was sometimes difficult to determine, because some teachers have a tendency for a very short wait-time in general. In addition to this, whether the teacher waits for his/her question to be

answered can be a matter of class size. If the class one is teaching is very big, there is limited possibility to wait for an answer. The age of the pupils is also a factor as well as the general atmosphere in the school. If the school emphasizes individual work and achievement and the student material is generally very intelligent and thus able and accustomed to work independently, the need for such question-answer exchange is not so high. Another view to the matter of wait-time is that sometimes questions can simply be means to rephrase and clarify an issue and not intended to be replied at all (rhetorical questions).

Another issue that proved problematic was the F-move and its functions in respect to how its functions are to be differentiated from each other. Cullen (2002), for example, implies that repeating the reply is used as “a time-honoured way of acknowledging a student response, and confirming it as acceptable, and in the process, ensuring that all the students have heard it” (Cullen 2002: 125). The significance of this is that there is a thin line between *accept* and *positive evaluation*, and that makes analyzing them quite challenging to say the least.

Finally, Cullen (2002) brings forth the notion of ‘implicit evaluation’, as he calls it, which makes the task of analyzing the use of the F-move even more complex. As Cullen says, discursive follow-up move emphasizes content rather than form. However, he continues, even when there is no explicit correction on the form of the student’s answer, the teacher may give implicit feedback by reformulating the utterance in a linguistically more appropriate form (Cullen 2002:120). In other words, what Cullen is referring to is that reformulating the reply, which has been treated as a realization of discursive follow-up, is also a form of implicit evaluation. One should bear these matters in mind before making further generalizations based on the results of this study.

#### **4.4 Findings**

In this section, I will present my findings and reflect them in the light of the literature that was introduced in the first part of this study. The results of the analysis were not surprising as such keeping in mind the modern goals in language teaching and the guidelines for language teaching (Opetussuunnitelman perusteet, updated 2004) that are currently at use in schools in Finland: The emphasis on communication was evident within the data. However, the results were conflicting in regards to the literary sources. This section of the pro-gradu thesis is formed so that the results of the F-move analysis are presented first as it is in such a dominant role in this study. Then the results of the analysis of teachers' questions are presented, and finally some space is dedicated to reflecting on the results of the analysis of how meanings were negotiated in the data. The chapter ends with a brief summary of my findings.

The results of the F-move analysis are presented below in two forms. It has to be taken into consideration that the data from the lessons was of different lengths, and therefore the numbers of occurrence that are presented below in Table 1 are not a direct indication of the extent to which the teacher used different functions of the F-move. These numbers were not used in the analysis as such, but each teacher's personal use of the different functions was calculated and in further analysis this was presented in percentages, giving numbers that made possible comparisons between the three teachers and their use of the different functions of the follow-up move (Diagram 1).

functions of the F-move	teacher 1	teacher 2	teacher 3	total
<b>accept</b>	18	1	9	28
<b>evaluate</b>				
positive	6	7	1	14
negative	1	-	-	1
<b>discuss</b>				
reformulation	10	6	2	18
elaboration	2	1	-	3
comment	6	2	7	15
repetition	5	-	-	5
<b>total</b>	48	17	19	84

Table 1. The F-move and its functions as they occur in the data.

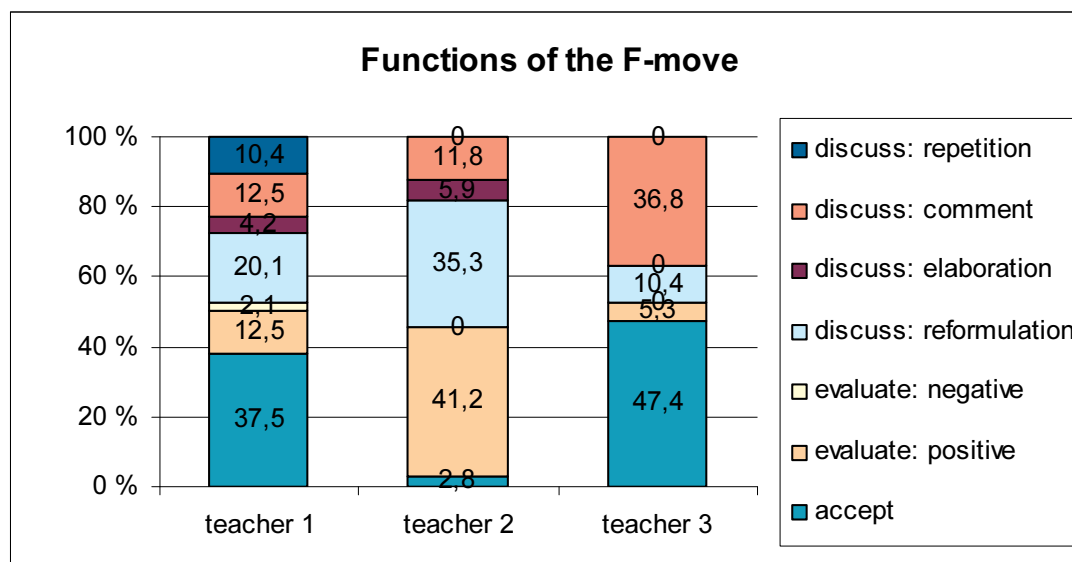


Diagram 1. Functions of the F-move for each teacher.

Teacher 1 had most variability in her use of the F-move. However, there are two functions that she used more than others; *accept* was used in almost 40% of the cases, and there was a high number (20, 1 %) of *reformulation*. The evaluative use of the F-move was used sparingly, and the instances that it did occur in where ones of positive evaluation. These findings indicate that teacher 1 was consistent in signaling the pupils that she had heard the

reply and that the reply had been appropriate. This, together with *reformulation* indicates the teacher's will to make the verbal exchange more fluent and natural.

S: Helicopter is better. (than an airplane)

T: Helicopter is better? What way?

S: Erm... You don't get so high and it feels more the speed. Speed feels you know.

T: You feel the speed. Aha. In the airplane you don't?

S: Noh. No.

S2: When you're taking off, then.

T: Yeah. Yeah when you're taking off then you feel the speed. (From Text 1)

Teacher 2 breaks away from the line of the other two teachers by her tendency to give plenty positive evaluation (41, 2%) and by her use of *reformulation* (35, 3%). This is clearly seen from the data retrieved from her lesson (Text 2). It shows that her exchanges in the conversation are much lengthier than teacher 1 or teacher 3 tends to use. While these two teachers used *accept* in isolation quite frequently (teacher 3 approximately half of the time and teacher 1 nearly 40% of the time), and generally followed up with one word or a short utterance, teacher 2 showed no tendency to do the same. In stead, she makes the effort to elaborate on the subject and reformulate it so that the message is surely understood by the class. (This behavior also enables the teacher to slip new words and phrases into the conversation and this way add to the students' vocabulary without being too obvious).

T: What should I do to fall asleep better?

S: I think you should take your school books or school stuffs and start to...start reading them and I'm sure you will fell asleep very quickly.

T: You mean like your compositions for instance...

S: Yeah.

T: ...or listening comprehension test...Yeah. That's usually a good idea to read something. And something not too exciting... but your compositions are too exiting so maybe something like a,b,c,d, like multiple choice. That's good advice there.

(From Text 2)

Teacher 3 shows the least amount of variability in her use of the F-move. The two functions that stand out clearly from the data are *accept* (36, 8%) and *comment* (47, 4%). This indicates that she wants to signal the students that the reply has been appropriate. In the light of the subject of their discussion in Text 3 (the reading and writing habits of the students), the fact that she tends to regularly comment on the reply, is a way to signal her students that she is interested in what they said and that she values their opinion.

S: Erm... I like the da Vinci code.

T: Aha. Ok. Did you read that in English as well?

S: No.

T: In Finnish?

S: Yeah.

T: Ok. It's good if you can make this transition... You start reading books in English and it... it will be really great travelling around the world, just buy any book anywhere and feel comfortable.

(From Text 3)



According to what I had read about teacher feedback and its strong foothold in classroom discourse, I expected to find multiple examples of the evaluative use of the F-move, but ended up finding but a few. Of the 84 F-moves in the data, only 15 were realized by evaluative acts. Of these 15 only one fell into the category of negative evaluation.

IRF structure	move	utterance	act
Teacher Initiation	Opening	Who else is working there? (on an aircraft)	elicitation
Student Response	Answering	Security.	reply
Teacher Follow-up	Follow-up	Security? What do you mean?	evaluate comment

(From Text 1, see Appendix)

For clarity, the teacher's follow-up move from the above example is presented below with intonation pattern.

T: // r+ se CUR ity //

Positive evaluation existed most commonly inside lengthier utterances, and was therefore not as explicit as in many of the examples in Sinclair and Coulthard ('yes', 'good', 'fine'). There was great variation between the study subjects in regard to positive evaluation. Teacher 2 tended to use it more than the others; in her case it occurred in over 40% of the F-moves (see Diagram 2).

	move	utterance	act
Teacher Initiation	Opening	What else should I do?	elicitation
Student Response	Answering	You should count seep...sheep.	reply
Teacher Follow-up	Follow-up	Yeah that's what they say so count sheep. You go one, and a two, and a three and that's tedious enough...boring enough...yeah. Good.	accept elaboration evaluate

(From Text 2, see Appendix)

Teacher 1 used positive evaluation moderately often; 12, 5 % of her F-moves were labelled evaluative in the positive sense. Contrary to teacher 2 and her elaborative, lengthy utterances, in nearly all the cases with teacher 1, the evaluative act took the form of repeating the student response in a high fall intonation pattern. Below are examples of this from her lesson (Text 1).

T: Do you know what kind of staff there is working on an aircraft?

S: Captain.

CAP

T: // p            tain //

T: What comes into your mind when you think about flying?

SS: Birds/ sky/free fall

BIR

T: // p            ds //

Teacher 3 on the other hand used very little positive evaluation in her F-moves; only 5, 3 % of the f-moves fell into the category of positive evaluation.

On the whole, it can be said that the majority of the F-moves were realized by either *discuss* or *accept*, which indicates the discorsal role (as opposed to the evaluative role) of the F-move according to Cullen's terminology. This suggests that the discourse that took place was very communicative in nature; the focus was rather on the message than on form. There were no instances of error correction as such, only instances where the teacher rephrases pupils' utterances to put them in a more fluent form and to feed them back to the general classroom conversation. This corresponds to Walsh's (2002) view on there being certain logic to stressing the importance of communication and the flow of the conversation as opposed to correcting the errors that students make. The diagram below shows the comparison between the occurrences of evaluative and discorsal follow-up. It is clear that

discoursal follow-up was more common in the data, and that evaluative follow-up was less frequently used.

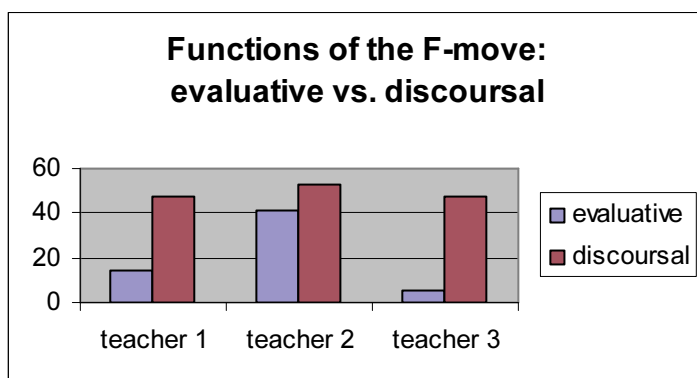


Diagram 2. The evaluative and discoursal uses of the F-move for each teacher.

Reformulating in particular tended to be used quite often by the three teachers. The following example is from Text 1 (see Appendix). The teacher is asking the pupils what they think about flying.

T What's your experience?

S Erm... I always get really nervous when it takes flying.

T Mmhmmm... When you're... when it takes off?

S Yeah.

Another example of reformulation is from Text 2. The teacher is asking to hear the students' pie in the sky dreams. The student is short of words and beginning to feel the pressure. After giving him some time to form a complete sentence the teacher, seeing that the student is in distress, intervenes and puts into words what he clearly wishes to communicate.

T: Anything that you have in mind Leo?

S: Mmhmm. I have no dreams about... no... äh. Hmmm ...

T: ... Nothing specific that you'd like to take place? I'll let you think about it.

Maybe it came a bit sudden.

It should be noted that teacher 1 was the only one to use repetition. This is explained away by the fact that teacher 1 taught comprehensive school pupils (grade 9). Students at this level require more attention from the teacher to the fact that pupils can follow the discussion and that everybody understands what has been said. It is hence evident that the teacher used repetition as a tool to ensure communication. In the example below the teacher is asking the class to name the kind of staff that is working on an aircraft.

S: Usually the second pilot.

T: Usually the second pilot. Ok.

T: OK. The captain. What's his occupation?

SS: Pilot.

T: He's a pilot. OK.

(From Text 1)

One focus of this study was teachers' questions and their functions in respect to whether they forward negotiation of meaning and promote SLA. As discussed in section 3.3.2, *referential* questions support free communication whereas *display* questions are often used for didactic purposes only and the answer is known to the teacher. Therefore answering to *display* questions does not advance language acquisition in the same degree as answering to *referential* questions. In addition to *referential* questions, *echoic* questions are seen to support

natural language acquisition processes. On the whole, one can state that *echoic* questions support negotiation of meaning in its true sense: *Echoic* questions ask for the repetition of an utterance or confirmation that an utterance has been interpreted as intended. In the data there was considerable variation in the use of *echoic* questions. Teacher 1 used *echoic* approach significantly more than the other two. Again, this must be viewed against the fact that teacher 1 was teaching pupils from comprehensive school.

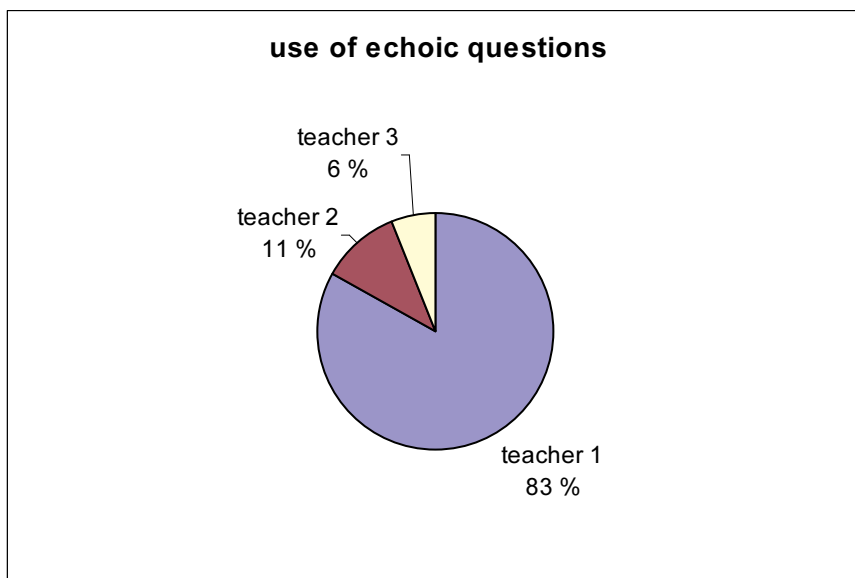


Diagram 3. The proportions of echoic questions used by the teachers.

Teacher 1 used a variety of *echoic* questions in comparison to teacher 2 and teacher 3: the material from her lesson included examples of all three types of *echoic* questions (*comprehension checks*, *clarification requests* and *confirmation checks*), where teacher 2 and teacher 3 used only *confirmation checks* a few times (see Diagram 5).

Long and Sato (1983) found that display questions dominate the classroom situation and their study showed that referential questions were only 14 % of all questions asked by teachers. The results of this study, however, do not concur. In fact, according to the study results, referential questions dominate in the classroom setting and form 49% of all the

questions asked. All three teachers used referential questions more than any other type of questions (see Diagram 4).

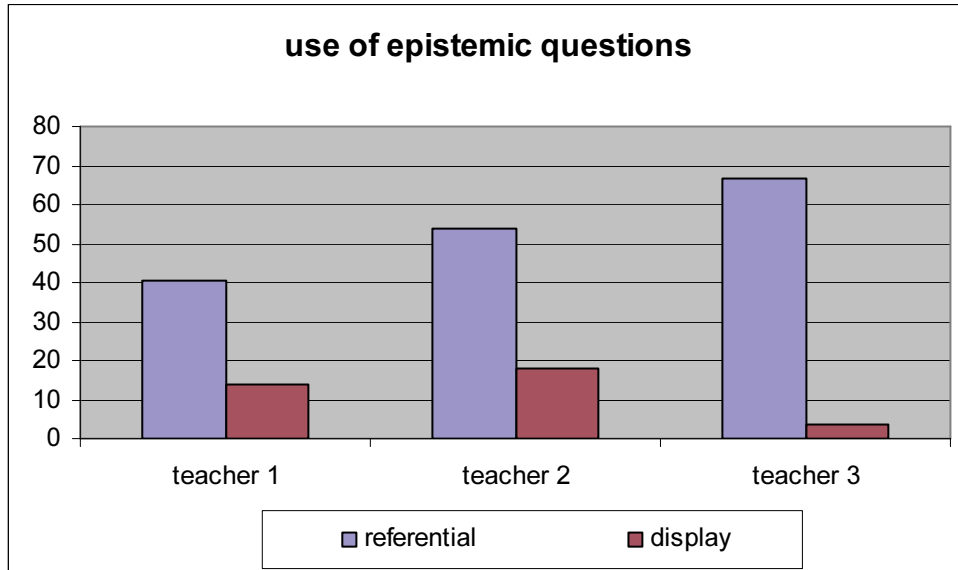


Diagram 4. Referential questions versus display questions

On average, the teachers used referential questions 50% of the time, which, as opposed to display questions, leaves much room for student response and communication in L2 and helps the process of SLA. To exemplify this difference, there is an example of display and referential type of questions. The examples are from Text 2 (see Appendix).

S: Drink a glass of milk.

T: Yeah. That's what they say. Should it be warm or should it be cold? (display)

S: Warm.

T: Yeah, warm milk.

T: So let's hear your pie in the sky dreams. Any volunteers? I already volunteered by a wonderful a trip around the world. Anything that you'd like to do?  
Anything that you have in mind? (referential)

If one takes a more careful look at the results, it can be depicted that teachers 1 and 2 showed very similar tendency in the ratio of referential and display questions. Teacher 3, however, used referential questions slightly more often, nearly 70% of the time. In contrast, the amount of display questions was lower than with teacher 1 or 2. The content of discussion in all three lessons explains these slight differences in the results. Teachers 1 and 2 led a discussion that was more or less planned in advance: Teacher 1 led her pupils to the world of flying and pilots, teacher 2 wanted her students to give her advice on how to fall asleep better. Teacher 3, however, wanted to know the reading and writing habits of her students. This is an uncharted territory to the teacher, and it explains why the ratio of referential questions was so high. It concurs with Cullen's (2002) statement, that referential questions promote the discursual use of the F-move because with referential questioning, the focus is on communicative aims rather than on form. Referential questions bring forth personal responses from the students that take the discussion on to unknown directions. This way, the teacher can not follow a rigid lesson plan.

The results of the analysis of teachers' questions are presented below in a graphic form (Diagram 5) containing a breakdown of the questions according to their functions.

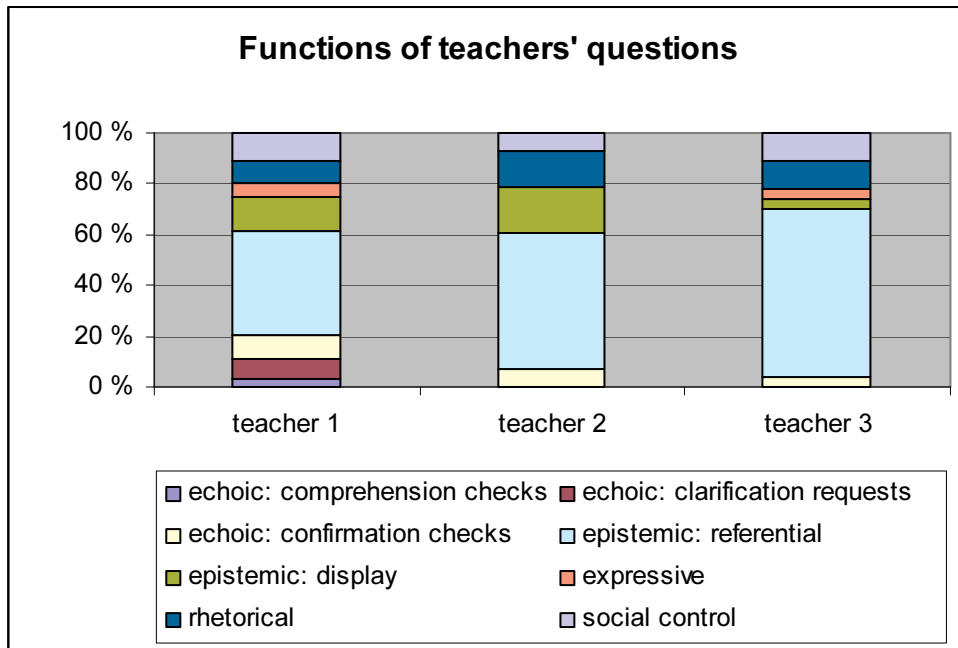


Diagram 5. Functions of teachers' questions

The diagram shows that with all three teachers the usage of referential questions was significantly more frequent than other types of questions. Approximately 40% of the questions that teacher 1 asked were referential questions. The same number for teacher 2 is 54%, and for teacher 3 the number is 67%. Teacher 1 was the only one to ask questions that function as clarification requests (8%) or comprehension checks (3%). Once more it must be stated that this difference is most likely caused by the difference in the student material (comprehensive school versus upper secondary school). A surprisingly high percentage of questions took a rhetorical nature: teacher 1 (8, 3%), teacher 2 (14, 3%), teacher 3 (11, 1%). The following example of a rhetoric question is from Text 2. (Teacher is asking for tips to fall asleep.)



S: Get some Scottish double... (laughter)

S: ...before you sleep.

T: (laughter) So have some whisky. Well, I don't know if we have any whisky in the house. Mmmm. Might be worth thinking about. Is that what you usually do?  
(laughter –no answer expected)

A number of questions fell in to the category of social control. The percentages were roughly the the same for each teacher (teacher 1 and teacher 3: 11%, teacher 2: 7%). The following example illustrates questions for social control:

T: Mikko. What's the problem? (Teacher focuses her attention to him because he is making noise.)

(From Text 1)

On the whole, the biggest gain from the question analysis was the exposure of the high percentage of referential questions in the data. This finding was contrary to the literary sources (e.g. Long and Sato (1983)) which stated display questions as the dominant question type in the classroom situation. However, times have changed since the 1980's, as well as teaching guidelines along with the roles of teachers and students. The usage of referential questions as opposed to display questions support the modern way of teaching which emphasizes discussion and open communication.

In cases where students were struggling with their contribution to the discussion, the teacher used negotiation of meaning as a means to help the student. There were a number of examples of negotiation, especially in Text 1. This example shows how the teacher helps the student to communicate in L2. The starting point for this conversation was to think of the kind of staff that is working on an aircraft. The extract begins with a student response.

S Security.  
 T Security?  
 S Yes. Yes.  
 T What do you mean?  
 S There is a... yeah. There is a guy who sits in there and... if someone starts to...  
 (gesturing gun-fire)  
 T Fight or give trouble.  
 S Yeah.  
 S2 Niin se... se heitetään ikkunasta pihalle!  
 (laughter)  
 T I don't believe you.  
 S There is a... like a... a... Siel lentokoneen peräosassa on sellanen pieni luukku  
 mistä voidaan heittää pihalle.  
 T Say that in English and I will believe you.  
 S Prison like in airplane.  
 T A prison?  
 S Siis sellanen... (gesturing)  
 T Oh... Like a cage or something.  
 S no sellanen... sellanen...huone sellanen...  
 T In English. You can do it, Antti.  
 S room  
 T Ok. A small room.  
 S With a lock.  
 T With a lock. And what happens?  
 S Erm...  
 T Mikko.  
 S If someone starts trouble then they throw in there  
 T They throw... yeah. They don't throw you out! ...do they... no...  
 S Are you sure?  
 T I'm not sure but I hope so!

(From Text 1, see Appendix)

Negotiation of meaning can be realized through a number of ways. Reformulation, elaboration, repetition and comment (strategies to carry out the discursual role of the F-move) are all tools to implement negotiation. In addition to these, questions can be used effectively for scaffolding (a means to realize negotiation of meaning) purposes. Especially echoic questions are used to ensure understanding between interlocutors. All of these strategies were present in the data.

The findings suggest that the aim of the discourse was on teacher-student communication in all three lessons. The teachers' focus was clearly on finding mutual

understanding and dialogue between teacher and students, which, according to theories on SLA, greatly supports the language acquiring process. However, as Cullen (2002) (see 3.3.3) argues, focusing too much on discursive follow-up will result in pupils' inefficiency to see their mistakes or skills to self-correct them. This is why, according to Cullen, both types of follow-up are important, and the teacher should be skilled to use both equally. The data that this study was based on, indicated very little evaluative follow-up. However, I do not believe that it is as scarce as this analysis suggested. I believe that had I recorded a different type of lesson, I would have found more evaluative use of the move (for example grammar lessons (although these normally have Finnish as the preferred teaching language) or lessons where exercises are being checked). Also, the fact that these transcripts didn't show evaluative follow-up does not mean it does not occur. As Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) point out, the evaluative component may well be implicit, or even non-verbal. The teacher may imply satisfaction with the last answer by proceeding to the next question, nodding, or smiling, for example.

In summary, the results of this analysis show that the teachers used various tools to help the acquisition of English. They modified their input in many ways and used scaffolding tools and other means (e.g. echoic questions) that resulted in meanings being efficiently negotiated, which according to Krashen (1981), Cullen (2002), Musumeci (1996) and many other researchers leads to genuine communication. The focus on communicative strategies is in concord with the guidelines for language teaching (opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2004). However, these results are inconsistent with some of the literary sources that formed the basis for this study. There is a possibility that this discrepancy is due to the literature not having been able to keep up with changing times and modern trends in language teaching.

## 5. Conclusion

An attempt was made to find out how communicative ESL teaching in Finland is these days. This goal was successfully met and it gave fine results. The analysis showed that the new teaching program (opetusuunnitelman perusteet 2004) requirements for communication are well met and that students have the freedom to iterate their own ideas and thoughts, as opposed to chanting in chorus and learning lines by heart, which was the typical language learning situation some decades ago. To see this study through has required familiarizing with literature from various areas of classroom research. Even in the final stages of study, the need for further reading became apparent as the question of intonation and its role in discourse came up in many places.

Sinclair and Brazil state that the main features of classroom talk arise from such matters as the role of the teacher in society, the prevailing legal and disciplinary responsibilities, and the fashion in what they call 'student-centredness' (1982: 3). There have been dramatic changes in these matters over the years; teacher is now less of an authority and more like an equal in the classroom. As for student-centredness: in many cases the student is regarded as a client, and modern school is seen as a place which sole purpose is to offer services for our young citizen. These changes have brought up new needs for research of classroom talk. The focus has shifted from studying the typical features of the educational system to what type of utterances promote what type of response. In other words, the focus of study in classroom talk today is not in *what* but more in *how*: The focus is in meeting the practitioner's needs. The need lies in wanting to know how one can best (and most efficiently) reach the desired outcome.

Looking back, I realize there are some issues that should have been conducted differently. First and foremost the data would have proved more valuable had it been more homogeneous. The lessons would give more information should they be as alike as possible, preferably the same lesson as regards to its content, realized by a different teacher. That would have given data that is more easily compared and contrasted. In the current situation, I find that my results are in many ways affected by the seemingly small differences in the lessons. Should I conduct a similar study in the future, I would not include data from lessons from both upper secondary school and the upper level of comprehensive school. It became clear in the course of this process that the methods of teaching in these two levels of schooling are too distinct from each other, as are the roles of teacher and pupil. These differences are bound to influence the data in many complex ways.

Nevertheless, this process has been exciting and meaningful in many respects and it has given the writer a great understanding to the functions of the ESL classroom in terms of discourse and communication. Having some experience in the practical side of things, it was enlightening and worthwhile to read literature on classroom discourse and to learn about the inner workings of discourse. It will surely be a great asset in my future teaching career to have this knowledge. I firmly believe that it will function as a great motivating factor in the process of aiming towards natural communication and genuine dialogue between me as a teacher and my future students.

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## Appendix

About the transcription system:

An attempt was made to keep the transcripts as readable as possible and still to convey the required information. Language has not been corrected; instead, the intention has been to represent the exchanges as close to how they occurred in the classroom. Parts of the transcripts are labeled inaudible; the recordings were made under normal classroom conditions. As a result, background noise, people speaking simultaneously and other types of interference have made parts of the recordings unintelligible.

The following labels and symbols have been used:

T	Teacher
S	Student (unidentified)
S1	Student (identified student, using numbers)
SS	Unidentified students speaking in chorus
/ ok/ok/ok/	Simultaneous utterances
...	Pause of one second or less

Text 1

T We move on. Think about ... flying. Flying. What does it... What comes into your mind... when you... when you think about flying?

SS birds/ sky/ free fall

T Birds

S Free fall

T How many of you have flown? Everybody?

S We all have

T Everybody.

S Mä en oo ollu lentokoneessa koskaan.

T Never. Ever.

T How do you feel it would be like?

S (inaudible)

T Pardon?

S Well not so good

T Not so good. Why?

S I don't know.

T No?



T What's your experience?

S Erm... I always get really nervous when it takes flying.

T Mmmmm... When you're... when it takes off?

S Yeah.

T Aha.

S Mmmhm... And when it's landing.

T Aha... What are you afraid of?

S Like... Like in those movies when something goes wrong and like... you know.

T Yeah.

S Yeah.

T It's not a nice feeling.

S No.

T Mmmhm.

T Alfred. What's your experience?

S Erm... Well, I didn't feel nervous at all, but it is pretty interesting because you could see the land from the airplane but the annoying part was that the sun was so bright it was shining right in the eyes and you couldn't look out of the window so...

T So you couldn't see what it looked like

S Well I could sometimes... but not so often

T Mmmhm. Have you flown a lot?

S Well, not really. Not for pretty long distances.

T Mmmhm. Did you... did you like it?

S Well... I don't know... It was all right.

T Mikko. What's the problem? Have you flown?

S Yes.

T Yes? Tell us about it.

S It is not that special.

S2 Helicopter is better.

T Helicopter is better? What way?

S2 Erm... You don't get so high and it feels more the speed. Speed feels you know.

T You feel the speed. Aha. In the airplane you don't?

S2 Noh. No.

S3 When you're taking off, then...

T Yeah. Yeah when you're taking off then you feel the speed.

.....

T Erm... Do you... do you... know what kind of staff there is working on an aircraft?

Who's... who's working there?

SS Stuertit!

T Think... erm...if you think about the erm...I mean ...a... a passenger aircraft. Jussi?

S Captain.

T Captain. What's his role? Juuso.

S Mikä on ohjata?

T Erm.. stear.

S He steers the plane.

T He's the one who steers it.

S Yes.

T Ok. The captain. Erm... What is... What's his... what's his occupation?

SS Pilot.

T He's a pilot. Ok.

T Miska.

S1 Stuertess.

T Stuertess. What's that?

S1 It's... (inaudible)

T Pardon?

S2 May I

T Yes, please. Explain to us. No, no, no. In English.

S2 His the one who serves all the foods and drinks

T The waitressing gear. Are they always women?

S No.

S There are women

T Air hostesses they are called, too. Ok. Who else is working there? Olli.

S Usually the second pilot.

T Usually the second pilot. Ok. Antti.

S Security.

T Security?

S Yes. Yes.

T What do you mean?

S There is a... yeah. There is a guy who sits in there and... if someone starts to... (gesturing gun-fire)

T Fight or give trouble.

S Yeah.

S2 Niin se.. se heitetään ikkunasta pihalle!

(laughter)

T I don't believe you.

S There is a... like a... a... Siel lentokoneen peräosassa on sellanen pieni luukku mistä voidaan heittää pihalle.

T Say that in English and I will believe you.

S Prison like in airplane.

T A prison?

S Siis sellanen... (gesturing?)

T Oh... Like a cage or something.

S no sellanen.. sellanen...huone sellanen...

T In English. You can do it, Antti.

S room

T Ok. A small room.

S With a lock.

T With a lock. And what happens?

S Erm...

T Mikko.

S If someone starts trouble then they throw in there

T They throw... yeah. They don't throw you out! ...do they... no...

S Are you sure?

T I'm not sure but I hope so!

.....

T We are going to get acquainted with the pilot's occupation. Or... the education of a pilot.  
Do you know where in Finland you can study to be a pilot?

S Pilot school

T Markus.

S Pilot school called pilot factory and it's very expensive

T It's very... Pilot factory?

S Yes. Sen nimi muuten on... pilot factory

T Is it?

S Patria

T Where is it?

S I don't know

T You don't know.

S2 In Pirkanmaa Taitokeskus!

T Is it... is it state owned or is it private?

S It's private.

T Mmhmm.

S and that's why it's so expensive.

T And that's why it's so expensive.

T Is there any way to become a pilot in a... in a less expensive way?

S menee inttiin.

T Juuso. You can go to the airforce.

S Yeah.

T And... how does that happen?

S You go to the army and you have to go to this...some kind of...erm... erm... mikä pääsykoe

T Entrance examination.

S Yeah.

T So... not just anybody can walk in the... through the door and say I want to be a pilot.

.....

## Text 2

T Erm... This is really true. Last night I had a French visitor and I had been doing a lot of things and I had a lot of things on my mind and I had trouble sleeping. So please give me some advice now. What should I do to fall asleep better... tonight... What should I do?  
Yeah. Lauri.

S I think you should take your school books or school stuffs and start to... start reading them and I'm sure you will fell asleep very quickly.

T You mean like your compositions for instance...

S Yeah.

T or listening comprehension tests... Yeah. That's usually a good idea to read something. And something not too exciting...but your compositions are too exciting so maybe something like a,b,c,d like multiple choice. That's good advice there. What else should I do? Yes, Teemu.

S If you could do some...erm... athletic sports you would be...eiku, joo...it would be much easier to sleep.

T True, true. So if you do some exercise before going to bed that usually helps you feel a bit exhausted so that's a natural way. Anything else? That sounded very good. Yes, please.

S Get some Scottish double...

(laughter)

S... before you sleep.

T (laughter) So have some whisky. Well, I don't know if we have any whisky in the house. Mmmm. Might be worth thinking about. Is that what you usually do?

(laughter)

T Right. Yes, please.

S Drink a glass of milk.

T Yeah. That's what they say. Should it be warm or should it be cold?

S Warm.

T Yeah, warm milk. That's what they say. I'll try that as well. I'm almost there. I'm almost falling asleep. What else could I do? Yeah, please.

S You should count seep... sheep.

T Yeah that's what they say... so count sheep. You go one, and a two and a three and that's tedious enough... boring enough...yeah. Good. I'll try that so I'll let you know on Friday how it worked.

.....

T So let's hear your pie in the sky dreams. Any volunteers? I already volunteered by a wonderful a trip around the world. Anything that you'd like to do? Anything that you have in mind Leo?

S Mhmm. I have no dreams about...no...äh... Hmmm...

T Nothing specific that you'd like to take place? ...I'll let you think about it. Maybe it came a bit sudden...if you could have anything that's sometimes a bit difficult to choose. Anybody else? Any pie in the sky dreams? What would you like to do?

S I would like to have a stable of my own. And many hors...horses and they could roam free...

T Oh, that's a great dream. And what's the obstacle? Why can't you have your dream now?

S It costs a lot.

T Yeah. So sometimes our, like... as Tiina said, sometimes our dreams are really expensive.

.....

### Text 3

T It was nice that you took time to...really...elaborate these questions, but... Let's have a quick round and...and...see (inaudible) ...about your reading habits. Let's start here. Antti. Would you tell us a little bit about your reading habits and writing habits if you have any.

S I don't write very much but I read sometimes. It changes quite a lot. Sometimes I read a lot and sometimes not so very much.

T What sort of books? Romance? Fiction?

S Erm.. Probably my favourite is Mika Waltari.

T Ok... so it's not science fiction or anything like that... not fantasy

S Sometimes but not so much.

T Ok. And Mikko, what about your...

S Well, I read quite often and...well, I'm not a hobbyist writer myself

T Uhun. Ok. And Anni?

S Actually I hate reading. I...erm... just read school books. Or if I read, I read comics.

T Well, perhaps you will widen your horizons while you are here maybe you will get hooked by then.

S Maybe.

T Ok. Milla?

S I don't read also very much because I don't have time, but I would read if I had time and maybe when I'm old I'll start reading

T (laughter) Normally holidays are a good time... rainy days in summer at the summer cottage...also if you're at the airport or long flights. That's when I do most of my reading, at airports and on airplanes 'cause you have to just kill time somehow. And Petra?

S Erm... Well, I read when I have time and...and I actually never write.

T Mmhm.

S ...and my favourite books are Harry Potter (inaudible)

T You like Harry Potter. Do you read... read them in English?

S Mmhm..yeah.

T That's great...that's wonderful. Do you have any other favourite writers besides Rowling?

S Erm... I like the da Vinci code.

T Aha. Ok. Did you...did you read that in English as well?

S No

T In Finnish?

S Yeah.

T Ok. It's good if you can make this transition...you start reading books in English and it...it will be really great traveling around the world just buy any book anywhere and feel comfortable. And...erm... Henna?

S Erm... I don't read so ... but I like to read and sometimes very rarely I write short poems

T Uhun.

S But usually I don't have time to write.

T Poetry is fine. You can express your feelings

.....

T All right. What do you think is the right age to start reading to a child and why? What would you say? Before they can read surely somebody must read to them...get them interested in stories.... What do you think? What is the right age?

S1 Well, three or four.

T Three or four? Is there anyone who would start earlier than three or four? You don't have very much experience of babies yet, except Mikko...(laughter)

S2 I read to my little brother when I...I ... I read... but I don't remember when I started.

T Mmhm... That's so good of you.

S3 I read to my godson when he was one year old.

T They say you should actually read to them when they are even younger than one year. I don't know how much they get out of it but it's a soothing moment... They... they like to listen to the sound of your voice and...and... we don't really know how much they understand, maybe much more than we think.

.....