

APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS IN NON-ENGLISH MAJOR LARGE CLASSES

This paper presents a review of the approaches to classroom interactions. It first synthesizes different definitions of classroom interactions and then analyses two main approaches to classroom interactions, namely, interactionism and sociocultural theory. Besides, it discusses interactions in large classes as well as in non-English major classes. The paper also documents previous studies related to the topic.

1. Previous Studies Relating to classroom interactions

Many researchers have been done on teacher-student interaction. In Ralston's (2004) study, the researcher explored interactions that occur and are facilitated in mainstream classrooms where a majority of the students are English language learners, specifically in Southern Nevada. This research served to find out how students in local classrooms interact, and how these interactions are elicited by teachers, within instructional contexts. The research also considered if and how differentiated instruction and scaffolding impact the learning of English Language Learners in mainstream classrooms.

Contrast to Ralston, Muramatsu's (2008) study explored the general characteristics of, and the influence of, both teachers' and students' Nonnative Speaker (NS) status on teacher-student interaction during writing conferences within the context of university-level composition courses. It employed the interactional sociolinguistics approach focusing on the sociocultural factors (e.g., politeness, face, and power relationship) around which the characteristics of the communicative event are constructed. It also endeavored to address the aspect that is missing in previous research – whether or not the student attitudes towards teachers based on the teacher's NS status expressed in the questionnaire is reflected in actual interaction.

Joan Gorham (1988) identified a set of verbal teacher immediacy behaviors which similarly relate to increased student learning. Results indicated differentiated use of various types of verbal immediacy messages between small and larger classes, and that the impact of teacher immediacy behaviors (both verbal and nonverbal) on learning is coincidentally enhanced as class size increases.

The study by Dara Gay Shaw (2001) investigated the impact of gender dynamics and culture on interaction in the adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), from the teachers', students', and observer's points of view. The authors suggested teachers and students

from other cultures also need to be made aware of the increasing demand for the implementation of gender-fair teaching and administrative practices in education.

Deborah Spiro (2011) determined how interaction was facilitated in an online instructional media course and the value that instructors and students place on interaction in an online course.

In Tognini's (2007) study the researcher investigated the interaction of teachers and learners in ten primary and secondary school languages other than English (LOTE) classes in Western Australia, with the aim of providing a detailed picture of its nature and patterns. The study found that teacher-learner interaction featured various types of negative feedback, positive evidence and considerable reliance on interactional routines such as elicitation, non-corrective repetition, drilling and reinforcement.

Hsien-Chuan Lin (2009) examined students' experiences and perceptions of multiple interaction activities (self-directed, peer, and teacher feedback) implemented in a large multilevel EFL writing class in one private technological university in the southern part of Taiwan. Large size writing classes, quite common in private institutions of higher education in Taiwan, cannot be effectively operated to meet individual students' needs in improving their writing performance. Low achievers have difficulties in keeping up with competent writers in learning writing skills while advanced students complain of their learning too little from the class.

Meanwhile Larkin (2007) and Spiro (2011) focused on interactions in online classrooms. Larkin (2007) determined techniques instructors use to interact in an online environment and what procedural interaction criteria the instructors consider effective without face-to-face interaction. And Spiro (2011) determined how interaction was facilitated in an online instructional media course and to determine the value that instructors and students place on interaction in an online course.

However, the most interesting research on interaction and vocabulary is the one done by Tisomet Nugent (2009). In his study, he determined the value and impact of student-teacher interactions in relation to student motivation and achievement. It was further intended that the results of this study would add to the body of knowledge and resources available to enhance the learning experience and influence student success.

In the Vietnamese context, in Tran's and Le's (2013) report, the researchers examined the strategies the English teachers used in managing large classes. The results indicated that the majority of the teachers reported to adopt team work, group work and pair work as strategies to make students more responsible and active in their study.

From the review of previous studies above, it is clear that various aspects of classroom interactions have been explored; however in the issue of interactions in large non-English major classes has not been investigated systematically. Especially, comparison of teachers and students' belief of classroom interactions in these non English major classes has not been touched on. There remains a question how teachers and students perceive classroom interactions in these classes.

2. What is interaction?

There are a lot of definitions that have been put forward in the research on interactions. One of the major problems is that interactions have not been clearly or operationally defined (Wagner, 1994). The exact meaning of the term has varied across studies (Battalio, 2007). With a vast number of variables that contribute to interaction, it has become difficult to reach an agreement on exactly what constitutes interaction (Soo & Bonk, 1998).

As Moore (1989, p. 1) noted, interaction "carries so many meanings as to be almost useless". However, it is important to create a common knowledge base founded on consistent terminology and operational definitions to provide clarity in the development of knowledge (Bannan-Ritland, 2002; Reigeluth & Carr-Chellman, 2009). Vrasidas and McIsaac (1999, p. 25) pointed out that interaction is "the process consisting of the reciprocal actions of two or more actors within a given context". But Berge's (1999, p.6) definition was based on a compilation of researchers' interpretations as two-way communication among two or more people within a learning context, with the purposes either task/instructional completion or social relationship-building, that includes a means for teacher and learner to receive feedback and for adaptation to occur based upon information and activities with which the participants are engaged. While Wagner (1994, p. 8) provided a definition of interaction within the context of learner performance: "An instructional interaction is an event that takes place between a learner and the learner's environment. Its purpose is to respond to the learner in a way intended to change his or her behavior toward an educational goal". Henri (1995) noted that true interaction consists of three actions configured as a message from A to B; a message 16 from B responding to A; and,

ultimately, a message from A responding to the message from B. Common to all the aforementioned definitions is that interaction is seen as back- and-forth communication.

On the other hand, Yacci (2000) built on the concept of interaction with the following components: message loop, student's perspective, outputs in the form of content learning and affective benefits, and mutually coherent messages. The message loop flows from an originating entity to a target entity and back to the originating entity. Entities can take the form of students, instructors, computers, and others capable of sending and receiving messages. Loop patterns follow these pathways: student to teacher to student, Student 1 to Student 2 and back to Student 1, or student to interface and back to student. However, interaction is an important component of the educational experience that must be carefully planned and designed in the online classroom (Berge, 1999; Liaw & Huang, 2000; Northrup, 2001).

In fact teaching-learning interactions, like other interpersonal relationships, are characterized by both explicit and implicit communication (Mehrabian, 1981). Interpersonal perceptions and communicative relationships between teachers and students are crucial to the teaching-learning process, and the degree of immediacy between teacher and students is an important variable in those relationships (Andersen, 1978,1979; Richmond, Gorham & McCroskey, 1986).

Interaction is an important word for language teachers. Brown (1994) says that in the era of communicative language teaching, interaction is the heart of communication; it is what communication is all about. After several decades of research on teaching and learning languages, it has been discovered that the best way to learn to interact is through interaction itself. Theories of communicative competence emphasize the importance of interaction as human beings use language in various contexts to negotiate meaning. Rivers (1987) states that through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to read 'authentic linguistic material', or even the output of their fellow students in discussions, joint problem-solving tasks, or dialogue journals. In interaction, students can use all they possess of the language - all they have learned or absorbed in real life exchanges, where expressing their real meaning is important to them.

In general, interaction is the heart of communication. It is what we interpret in a context; we negotiate what we receive; we collaborate to accomplish certain purpose. Interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people resulting in a

reciprocal effect on each other. Clearly, theories of communicative competence emphasize the importance of interaction. As Jones (2006, p. 269-299) puts it, “Through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material, or even the output of their fellow students in discussions, students can use all they possess of the language – all they have learned or casually absorbed in real-life exchange. Even at an elementary stage, they learn in this way to exploit the elasticity of language”. And from the very beginning of language study, classroom should be interactive. “Interaction and interactive language constitutes a major role in EFL teaching, because a teachers’ interactive language can keep an interaction going on smoothly in English foreign language classroom” (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p, 165-227)

3. Classroom Interactions

Interaction occurs everyday in the classroom activities between the teacher and the learners. In fact, interaction between teachers and students in classrooms is one of the primary means by which learning is accomplished in classrooms. In language classrooms, interaction takes on an especially significant role in that it is both the medium through which learning is realized and an object of pedagogical attention. Early research interested in interaction and learning from a sociocultural perspective focused on describing the patterns typical of classroom interaction (Barnes, 1992; Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979).

In my process of teaching, I have realized that teacher-student interaction is vital to student learning, but approaching student feedback in large classes is challenging. Some teachers who taught in large classes claim that in large classes students can feel anonymous and voiceless. And the threat of exposing their ignorance is often sufficient to keep their heads down. Besides they noted that teachers in large classes often feel compelled to focus on content delivery. As a result, the emphasis is shifted to the ‘knowledge’ rather than the understanding, evaluation and synthesis.

Another aspect of classroom interaction is student to student interaction which is one of the strongest predictors of students persistence and student development (Tinto,1999). Student can feel a connection with their peer group that provides a framework of support that helps their motivation and course persistence. Students echoed this comment as they were interviewed on the importance of their cohort groups in terms of persistence and quality learning (Dorn et al., 1995). Students in cohort groups felt the encouragement and support from the other members of

their group helped them to continue with their studies. Clearly, student-student interaction can also affect the quality of learning.

Drawing on Halliday's (1975) theory of language, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) described what they found to be the basic unit of classroom interaction, a three-part sequential IRE (Information, Response, Evaluation) exchange. This exchange involves the teacher, in the role of expert, eliciting information (I) from individual students in order to ascertain whether each knows the material. The teacher does this by asking a known-answer question to which the student is expected to provide a brief response (R). The teacher then evaluates the student's response (E) with such typical phrases as "Good," "That's right", or "No, that's not right." After completing a sequence with one student, the teacher typically moves into another round by asking either a follow-up question of the same student or the same or a related question of another student. Much subsequent research on classroom interaction has revealed the ubiquity of the three-part IRE pattern in western schooling, from kindergarten to the university (e.g., Barnes, 1992; Cazden, 1988; Gutierrez, 1994; Green & Dixon, 1993; Mehan, 1979; Nystrand, Gamoran, Kachur, & Pendergast, 1997; Smagorinsky & Fly, 1993).

There are connections between the IRE pattern of language use and language development. Cazden (1988), for example, in a study of the discourse of several elementary language arts classrooms, revealed how the use of the IRE often facilitated teacher control of the interaction rather than student learning of the content of the lesson. Similarly, Barnes (1992) found that the frequent use of the IRE pattern of interaction did not allow for complex ways of communicating between the teacher and students. Rather, it was the teacher who decided who would participate, when students could take a turn, and how much they could contribute. Barnes concluded that extended use of the IRE severely limits students' opportunities to talk through their understandings and try out their ideas in relation to the topic-at-hand, and, more generally, to become more proficient in the use of intellectually and practically complex language.

In perhaps the most comprehensive study on classroom interaction and learning to date, Nystrand et al. (1997) found that in their study of 112 eighth and ninth grade language arts and English classrooms in the United States, the use of the IRE pattern of interaction was negatively correlated with learning. Students whose classroom interaction was almost exclusively limited to the IRE pattern were less able to recall and understand the topical content than were the

students who were involved in more complex patterns of interaction. Moreover, they found that the use of the IRE sequence of interaction was more prevalent in lower-track classes.

In an attempt to uncover more specific links between classroom interaction and learning, Wells (1993) decided to look more closely at the three-part IRE pattern of interaction. His data came mainly from a number of science classrooms with teachers he considered to be expert. While his observations of the interaction in these classrooms revealed enthusiastic, extended student participation in class discussions, his sequences. Upon closer inspection, however, he found subtle changes to the standard pattern, primarily in the third part. More specifically, he found that while the teachers often asked questions of students, they did not typically close down the sequence with a narrow evaluation of the student responses. Rather, they more often followed up on them, asking students to elaborate or clarify, and in other ways treated student responses as valuable contributions to the ongoing discussion. Wells (1993) concluded that when the third part of the IR sequence contained a teacher evaluation (E) of a student response, the pattern severely constrained students' learning opportunities. However, if, in the third part, the teacher followed up on student responses (F) by asking them to expand on their thinking, clarify their opinions, comment on others' contributions, or make connections to their own experiences, student opportunities for learning through interaction were enhanced. Thus, he concluded that the typical 3-part interaction exchange found in classrooms is neither entirely good nor entirely bad. Instead, it depends on the kind of follow-ups teachers contribute in response to student contributions.

Nassaji and Wells (2000) provide a more comprehensive discussion of various options for the follow-up move in the three-part exchange in classroom interaction. Their data come from a six-year research project involving nine elementary and middle school teachers and three university researchers. Their specific focus in the project was on teacher contributions in the third part of the three-part sequence. They found that, just as they suspected, the kind of contribution made by the teacher in the third part of the sequences shaped the direction of subsequent talk. Conversely, teacher contributions that invited students to expand upon or qualify their initial responses opened the door to further discussion, and provided more opportunities for learning.

However, some researchers think that classroom interaction is both verbal and nonverbal. Hall and Sandler (1984), who wrote on the variation of nonverbal behavior across

cultures, suggested that nonverbal behavior such as eye-contact, leaning forward, nodding to show attentiveness, and refraining from touching and invading the space of the students have an impact on intercultural communication. These nonverbal behaviors vary markedly in their acceptability from culture to culture (Klopf, 1998, Sadker, 1999).

But Sadker and Sadker (1990) contend that teachers have little insight into their own interaction patterns. They even use the term "gender bias blindness." Both male and female teachers simply do not see that they are treating their male and female students differently. Smithson (1990, p. 17) in her article on power in the classroom suggests that, while traditional teachers use power unconsciously, teachers aiming to shift and share power in the classroom must constantly allow for "the power inherent in their positions". Grant and Tate (1995, p. 334 - 335) cite an article on successful teachers of African American students who were neither rigid nor authoritarian. "These teachers shared power with the students because they viewed education as an empowering force...[in which] students interacted collaboratively and accepted responsibility for each other's education". One way of categorizing classroom interaction comes from Miller (1993), and Maher & Tetreault (1994), who use the following four critical themes for their analysis of classroom interaction: mastery, voice, authority and positionality.

3.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction

This type of interaction as Coulthard (1977) mentions has received a great deal from teachers in a wide range of disciplines. It happens between the teacher and one learner or many other learners, that is to say a teacher takes a part in such interaction. He negotiates with his students the content of the course, asks questions, uses students' ideas, lectures, gives directions, criticizes or justifies student talk responses. On the other hand, the students will benefit by drawing on the experience of their teachers on how well to interact in the manner that is most effective. During teacher-learner interaction, the students seek to demonstrate their speaking and listening skills in front of their teachers that is why latter should consider his way of interacting which is very crucial in learning and teaching. According to Harmer (2009) teachers should focus on three things when they talk with their students. Firstly, they must pay attention to the kind of the language the students are able to understand, i.e. teachers should provide an output that is comprehensible for the level of all the students. Secondly, the teachers must think about what they will say to their students, hence the teacher speech is as a resource

for learners. Finally, teachers also have to identify the ways in which they will speak such as the voice, tone and intonation.

To enhance interaction between teachers and learners through the interaction, students can increase their language store. In interaction, students can use all language they possess, expressing their real meaning important to them. At an elementary stage learners learn to exploit the elasticity of language to make the little they know go a long way. Their brains are dynamic, constantly interacting what they have learned with what they are learning, and the give and take of message exchanges enables them to retrieve and interrelate a great deal of what they have encountered. In a second language situation, interaction is essential to survive in the new language and culture. Thus they have experienced in creating messages from what they hear and in creating discourse that conveys their interaction.

3.2. Learner-Learner Interaction

Many theories of learning maintain that knowledge is actively constructed and skills improved through interactions between learners. Johnson (1995) supports that if learner-learner interaction is well structured and managed, then it can be an important factor of cognitive development, educational achievement of students and emerging social competencies. It can also develop the learners' capacities through collaborative works. So, learners will establish social relationship through this kind of interaction, where the

sense of learning community is promoted and isolation is reduced in the classroom.

Naegle Paula (2002: 128) adds "talking students with their peers about the content of the course is a powerful way for them to reinforce what they have learned." The teachers, then must encourage such type of interaction between learners because it is the fastest and the best way, it makes learners active rather than passive participants.

Although most of the studies on classroom interaction have occurred in first language classrooms, a few recent studies have confirmed the ubiquity of the IRE pattern in second and foreign language classrooms and documented its constraints on learning as well. For example, in my own investigations of a high school Spanish language classroom (Hall, 1995), I found that, in her interactions with the students, the teacher most often used the IRE pattern of interaction. The teacher typically initiated the sequence with a display question, and her responses to students, the third part of the third-part sequence, were almost always an evaluation of the grammatical correctness of their responses to the initial question. I further

found that the pervasive use of this pattern of interaction over the course of an academic semester led to mechanical, topically disjointed talk and limited students' use of the Spanish language to recalling, listing, and labeling. I concluded that extended student participation in exchanges of this type was unlikely to lead to learners' development of cognitively, linguistically.

In fact, research into learner-learner interaction has examined a range of issues. Studies with a cognitive interactionist theoretical orientation have concentrated on the investigating the cognitive and linguistic aspects of second language acquisition (SLA) that are facilitated by the interaction process. SLA studies based on sociocultural theory have viewed interaction as verbal mediation – that is, “the act of achieving control of tasks and activities through speaking” (Brooks, Donato & McGlone, 1997, p. 526) and have paid attention to the intrapersonal¹³ as well as the interpersonal functions of communication. As noted in the early part of this chapter, central to studies based on this theoretical orientation is the social origin of language development, the role of the ‘expert’ in scaffolding or mediating development to the point where the learner is self-regulating or autonomous (Lantolf, 2000) and the importance of contextual factors in influencing learning. More recently, these aspects of the learning process have also received increasing attention from other researchers including Swain (1998; 2000) and Swain and Lapkin (1998), through their investigation of the role of collaborative dialogue in language learning. Establishing the nature of the conversational interaction occurring in terms of the types and amount of feedback learners provide for each other has received considerable attention in studies with a cognitive interactionist orientation.

Normally , in large non-English major classes there are a lot of students coming from different cities where the patterns of classroom communication are quite different. Johnson (1995) points out that, the patterns of communication in most classrooms are not explicitly taught, but they are implicitly enforced through teachers' use of language; second language students may find it difficult to infer the norms for participation in classroom events. Thus, the ways in which these students talk and act in second language classrooms may seem strange or inappropriate in different cultural settings. Students bring with them the values and attitudes of their own cultures. So teachers are the ultimate authority and students do not participate in class discussions, and it becomes very difficult to make a class an interactive one. Students from such cultures may find it difficult to speak up in the relaxed environment of most U.S. classrooms.

In his article ‘Interactive discourse in small and large groups”, Kramsch (1987) conveys that the closeness or distance learners wish to establish with one another has to do with how well they know each other, how it will affect their self image, for example, the socially expected behavior of males and females. The concept of social distance is, moreover, culturally determined. In multicultural classes, difference in the value attached to verbal versus nonverbal communication can affect the distance learners wish to maintain in the foreign language. During my teaching experience with students of different cultural backgrounds, I used to help them in their efforts to communicate in a new language. Therefore I taught and learned a new culture as well. As a facilitator I had to take into consideration some of the cross-cultural issues, since I had students from multicultural backgrounds. I thought my understanding of cultural differences and my sensitivity to them was important to my students as the second language that I taught. My interest in their cultures encouraged them to communicate with me in the process teaching and learning.

4. The importance of interactions in English language teaching and learning

Apparently, interaction is very important in the classroom because it is the continuing interaction between instructors and students and between students (Liaw, 1999). As the teacher and student are intertwined through communication, teaching is no longer just “simply passing on content as if it was dogmatic truth” (Shale & Garrison, 1990b, p. 29). Rather, the instructor and learners must fully and actively participate to create a successful online experience (Palloff & Pratt, 2007). In fact interaction provides the opportunity for sharing perspectives, receiving feedback, and bringing about knowledge (Garrison & Shale, 1990). Through this process, a learning experience is created. That is not about the individual learner but, rather, is focused on the learners and their individualism. For example, LaPointe (2007, p. 84)) noted, “Often unmet needs drive a person, including teachers. I myself had not experienced much interaction as a learner throughout my many years spent in classrooms. In fact, when I shared answers with my high school classmates, we all 18 encountered various disciplinary measures for cheating. My undergraduate classes were filled with 200 plus students and a professor standing at the front podium. We listened, but we certainly did not set our learning objectives, select learning resources, or evaluate progress. No one invited our thoughts.”

It is considered that interaction can reduce learners’ feelings of isolation and anxiety. Normally in the traditional classroom, the instructor and the students have many opportunities

for interaction during and after class (Zhang & Walls, 2006). Students may develop friendships and meet for coffee, or they may contact each other for help with course content. In the online classroom, interaction cannot be assumed to occur (Northrup, 2001). Additionally, there is the potential for anxiety to develop, especially for those students who are unfamiliar with online education (Stodel et al., 2006). Shieh et al. (2008, p. 62) pointed out, "Feeling isolated is a major cause of students' stress that derives from frustration with technical glitches, apprehension caused by anticipating feedback from the instructor, and confusion or uncertainty about the instructional guidance". McIsaac et al. (1999) posited that isolation from the rest of the class is a drawback to the online experience, but interaction can provide the necessary motivation to students who experience this.

Hara and Kling's (2000) study about student distress in a distance education class showed that the complaints were related to technology issues and the absence of instructor interaction. They determined that frustration and confusion arose from a lack of clear and immediate feedback from the instructor. Jin (2005) found that students who brought feelings of fear into a course and subsequently experienced high levels of interaction were able to overcome their initial anxiety.

It is clear that interaction between learner-learner, learner-instructor, or learner-content is a vital component of the language learning. According to York, et.al (2007, p. 41), interaction is one of the primary goals of online education because it is connected to learning and the motivation to learn. Regardless of the setting - traditional classroom or an online program, interaction is a key factor in effective learning. Research conducted by Cao, Crews, Lin, Burgoon, and Nunamaker (2008, p. 53) indicates that "interaction with instructors and other students, either face-to-face or through an electronic medium, is a consistent and reliable predictor of positive learning outcomes (both achievement and satisfaction) in distance education programs, especially in asynchronous ones". They also indicate that learners view a lack of interaction as a detriment to their learning process. Interaction with instructors is important when looking for prompt feedback, guidance, and motivational and emotional support.

Language classrooms can be seen as sociolinguistic environments (Cazden, 1988) and discourse communities (Hall and Verplaetse, 2000) in which interaction is believed to contribute to learners' language development.

Teaching English in non-English major large classes, I have realized that the key is to keep the students moving and engaged just as a face to face classroom would be interaction. If students are engaged and know that they will be required to share their ideas or participate in a project or activity, they then will stay motivated and on task. However, Hutchinson (2007, p. 364) cautions that a large number of ideas posted at one time may actually hinder motivation. A really good idea may be overlooked and not receive attention or feedback it deserved causing that learner to perceive that what he/she has to say does not matter. Others may be apprehensive about how other learners may view and criticize their ideas. Overall maintaining motivation requires instructors to have a healthy support structure in place, develop a good rapport with the learners, and provide feedback to each of the learners.

In fact, interaction is important in a face to face classroom. When teachers incorporate asynchronous and synchronous communications into activities that require students to exchange views and work together, the acquired knowledge is much higher. It is important to take in factors that can increase motivation and interaction when setting up an activity or course. Asynchronous communication can promote higher critical thinking skills than synchronous communication, as well as initiate more interaction with quieter students. Synchronous communication can aid in communication, a sense of community, and clarify concepts with instant feedback. Online learning is here to stay, and it is important to try and make it as successful as possible. With the studies shown, it has proven that both types of communications are beneficial and complement each other in increasing the interaction between teacher to student, student to student, and student to content. When interaction is increased due to these communications, then acquired knowledge and successful learning is accomplished.

Chaudron (1988:10) stated that interaction is viewed as significant because it is argued that only through interaction, the learner can decompose the teaching learning structures and derive meaning from classroom events. Moreover, Allwright and Bailey (1991:25) stated that through classroom interaction, the plan produces outcomes (input, practice opportunities, and receptivity). In other words, interaction plays very important role in teaching-learning process.

5. Different approaches to classroom interactions

5.1 Interactionism/interactionist theory

In the field of second language acquisition, interaction has long been considered important in language learning. It requires in the process of second language learning the

presence of two or more learners who collaborate in achieving communication. Interaction is a way of learning in general and developing the language skills in particular. Long's (1990) as cited in Ellis (1994) interaction hypothesis emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input and claims that it is most effective when it is modified through the negotiation of meaning.

Interactionism refers to the central role of social interaction in the development of language. Trevathen (1974, p.230) writes, "Human intelligence develops from the start as an interpersonal process". Furthermore, Gordon Wells (1981, p.115) writes, learning to communicate is a collaborative affair. Right up to the early years of schooling and beyond, the adult is the more skilled participant, with a responsibility for helping the child to develop and extend his communicative skills at first pre-verbally then verbally, and later in written language. But at each stage, the child also has a contribution to make, stemming from his own purposes. The sort of interaction that will be most beneficial for his/her development therefore is that which gives due weight to the contribution of both parties, and emphasized mutuality and reciprocity in the meanings that are constructed and negotiated through talk.

The interactionist stresses the unification of nature and culture (Toulmin, 1978), the interweaving of the biological and the social factors. The term "interactionist" includes both the Vygotskian notion of social sources of development and also the dialectical mode of analysis. It attempts to capture the complex non-reductionist and nonlinear features of our subject. The term is used at times by researchers using an information theory perspective particularly in discussing bottom-up and top-down processes (Stanovich, 1980). As a consequence, some authors reject the term interactionist just because of this association with computational models.

With Tinto's interactionist theory, Tinto (2000) expanded on his earlier model to include the linkage between learning and persistence. In expanding upon his earlier Interactionist theory, Tinto (1975) emphasized the classroom community's role in student departure. The author believes the interaction that occurs in the classroom has the same linkage for student departure as the interaction within the larger social system he first suggested in 1975. He suggests in his revision that is the student involvement that springs from the students's interaction with other students and faculty within and related to the classroom that leads to the broader process of academic and social integration discussed in his original theory (Tinto, 2000b).

Long (1983) and Vygotsky (1987) have investigated the learning process of second language learners and argued that second language learning can happen through in class

interaction and oral communication. According to Long's (1983) Interaction Hypothesis theory, the interactional collaboration among peers can lead to second language learning.

Then, Long (1983) introduced the Interaction Hypothesis theory about the role of interaction in the second language learning. According to this theory, the modified input created within interaction can be facilitating in explaining linguistic forms that learners found difficult to understand. By modified input, it is thought to mean the input that is created through interaction by the interlocutors, in order to facilitate their comprehension (Ellis 1999). According to that, a second language can be acquired by the learners through in-classroom interaction (Ellis 1999; Ellis 1998; Ellis 1995; Long 2006; Ellis 1997). Through out the process of interaction the second language learners have the possibility to create the input they need in order to better understand new information (Mackey 1999; Ellis 1999). Even more, they are likely to have more chances to receive additional input and produce new output out of it (Mackey 1999).

Besides Long (1983), justified his theory through a study where he used a sample of sixteen non-native and sixteen native speaker pairs. He observed their oral communication during informal conversations, on their effort to explain the instructions of a game to each others. He found that even though linguistically all pairs - irrespectively of native or non-native combinations - were producing similar grammatical utterances, the native-non-native pairs in their effort to overcome the communication difficulties were more likely to use repetitions, clarification requests, or confirmation checks (Long 1983). Interaction Hypothesis theory maintains that the collaboration between the native – non-native interlocutors, in an effort to adjust the new input to their interlocutors' level of competence, increases the chances of comprehension.

Moreover, Long (1983) supports that during negotiation of meaning, interlocutors modify their conversation, recruiting strategies such as comprehension and clarification checks and comprehension requests in order to facilitate communication and understanding of the new input, without being aware of their intention (incidental acquisition).

Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1985) argues that negotiation of meaning in verbal interactions contributes to the generation of input favourable for second language development, and several studies have built upon the effect of negotiation of meaning on second language acquisition (Mackey , 1999; Pica, 1988, 1994, to name a few). In Ellis' review (1999) of the

updated version of Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996) two views of interaction are incorporated in the revised version of the theory that was presented by Long a decade earlier: an interpersonal process, to help learners notice relevant features in the input, and an intrapersonal activity, which involves different types of processing operations for learners to acquire the negotiated input.

It is clear that interactionist methods of investigation and analysis focus on the processes rather than the products of learning and development. Learning and development are the best examined as dynamic processes in meaningful contexts of social activity. Besides, one of the most important aspects of the interactionist theory of education concerns the ways in which teachers make sense of and respond to the behaviour of their students.

In summary, interactionism emphasizes the communication that actually takes place in the classroom between teachers and students and among students for language input and creating meaningful contexts for classroom activities.

5.2 Interactions in Sociocultural Theory:

5.2.1. What is sociocultural theory?

Sociocultural Theory (SCT) has its origins in the writings of the Russian psychologist L. S. Vygotsky and his colleagues. It is based on the concept that human activities take place in cultural contexts and are mediated by language and other symbol systems. It emphasizes the inter-dependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge. SCT argues that human mental functioning is fundamentally a mediated process that is organized by cultural artifacts, activities, and concepts (Ratner, 2002). Within this framework, humans are understood to utilize existing cultural artifacts and to create new ones that allow them to regulate their biological and behavioral activity. Language use, organization, and structure are the primary means of mediation. Practically speaking, developmental processes take place through participation in cultural, linguistic, and historically formed settings such as family life and peer group interaction, and in institutional contexts like schooling, organized sports activities, and work places, to name only a few. SCT argues that while human neurobiology is a necessary condition for higher order thinking, the most important forms of human cognitive activity develop through interaction within these social and material environments.

Sociocultural theory has made a great impact on the learning and teaching profession. According to Vygotsky (1978 cited Lantolf 2000), the sociocultural environment presents the

child with a variety of tasks and demands, and engages the child in his world through the tools. In the early stages, Vygotsky claims that the child is completely dependent on other people, usually the parents, who initiate the child's actions by instructing him/her as to what to do, how to do it, as well as what not to do. Parents, as representatives of the culture and the conduit through which the culture passes into the child, actualise these instructions primarily through language. On the question of how do children then appropriate these cultural and social heritages, Vygotsky (1978 cited Wertsch 1985) states that the child acquires knowledge through contacts and interactions with people as the first step (interpsychological plane), then later assimilates and internalises this knowledge adding his personal value to it (intrapyschological plane). This transition from social to personal property according to Vygotsky is not a mere copy, but a transformation of what had been learnt through interaction, into personal values. Vygotsky claims that this is what also happens in schools. Students do not merely copy teachers' capabilities; rather they transform what teachers offer them during the processes of appropriation.

5.2.2 Classroom Interactions in sociocultural theory

Sociocultural theory by Vygotsky and his colleagues has been widely applied in the field of education. Due to Vygotsky's views can be seen in the process approaches, which appeared as a reaction against the dominant product approaches in the 1960s and 1970s.

The product approaches are grounded on behaviourist principles and relate language teaching to linguistic form, discrete linguistics skills and habit formation. They claim that language consists of parts, which should be learned and mastered separately in a graded manner. The learner's role is to receive and follow the teacher's instructions; an example of these approaches is the audio-lingual approach. However, process approaches came up with views emphasising the cognitive aspect of learning and acknowledge the contributions that the learner brings to the learning context. According to these approaches, students should be taught what Horowitz (1986) terms as "systematic thinking skills". As a result, planning, setting goals, drafting and generating ideas became part of teaching strategies in second language (L2) classroom, particularly in the field of writing. In addition, the social aspect of teaching second language became an important part of L2 classroom literature, as spearheaded by Genre Approach (Gee 1997; Badger *et al.* 2000). Proponents of Genre tool for teachers to use in their teaching. Therefore, the theoretical basis of Genre Approach is firmly premised in the systemic functional

model that refers to the theory of genre as theory of language use, description of relationship between the context in which language occurs and the actual language being used (Gee 1997). Here, the emphasis is on social uses of language according to context, which tally with Vygotsky's ideas of the role of language as a social tool for communication.

The importance of meaning construction in the act of learning (reflecting Vygotsky's claims) is a hot topic in L2 classroom interactions. The rise of approaches such as integrative teaching of reading and writing is nothing but a recognition of the importance of meaningful interaction of L2 students with texts in classrooms. Zimmerman (1997) argues that enhancing students' competency in L2 should not be seen to be located in mastering skills. Too much concentration on skills could deprive students from engaging with what he refers to as aspects of literacy such as meaning construction, competency, fluency and flexibility with dealing with texts as readers and writers.

In Hall's study (1995) he mentioned a group of scholars concerned with interaction and additional language learning has recently begun exploring other fields (Block, 1996; Firth & Wagner, 1997, 1998; Hall, 1995a, 1997; Lantolf, 1995; Lantolf & Appel, 1994). These explorations have led to assumptions on the nature of language and learning that differ fairly substantially from those embodied in the more traditional approach to research on interaction and language learning.

In sociocultural view, language is not comprised of internal structures located in the individual. Rather, it is considered to be fundamentally social, comprised of linguistic resources whose meanings are both embodied in and constitutive of our everyday communicative activities and practices. So language learning is considered not the internal assimilation of structural components of language systems. Rather, it is a fundamentally social process, initiating in our social worlds. Constituting these worlds is a heterogeneous mix of goal-directed, regularly occurring, communicative activities and events comprised of various communicative means for their accomplishment. Through repeated participation in these activities with more capable members, we acquire the linguistic, sociocultural and other knowledge and competencies considered essential to full participation.

In the sociocultural perspective of learning, the essence of mind is considered to be inseparable from the varied worlds it inhabits. That is, the communicative contexts in which we participate, along with the particular linguistic means that are needed to communicate with

others in these contexts, do not simply enhance the development of universal mental structures that already exist. Rather, they fundamentally shape and transform them (Leontiev, 1981; Vygotsky, 1981). The more opportunities for taking part in our activities, the more fully we develop the linguistic, social and cognitive knowledge and skills needed for competent engagement.

In fact the classrooms are important sociocultural contexts so they are considered fundamental sites of learning. Because most learning opportunities are accomplished through face-to-face interaction, its role is considered especially consequential to the creation of effectual learning environments and ultimately to the shaping of individual learners' development. For it is in the discourse created in the interaction of these classrooms that teachers and students together develop particular understandings of what constitutes language and language learning.

6. Similarities and differences between interactionism/interactionist theory and sociocultural theory in terms of classroom interactions

There are some similarities and differences between interactionism/interactionist theory and sociocultural theory in terms of classroom interactions. In fact, interaction is the key to second language learning. Ellis (1985) defines interaction as the discourse jointly constructed by the learner and his interlocutors and input is the result of interaction. The interactionist view of language learning is that language acquisition is the result of an interaction between the learner's mental abilities and the linguistic environment. Long (1990) as cited in Ellis (1994) proposed that interaction is necessary for the second language acquisition. According to him, three aspects of verbal interaction can be distinguished: input, production and feedback. Input is the language offered to the learner by native speakers or other learners, production (output) is the language spoken by the language learners themselves and feedback is the response given by the conversational partners to the production of the learner. Besides, an integral part of an interactionist approach to language use and literacy is the recognition that context is a constitutive factor in language use, in the social construction of meaning.

In comparison, sociocultural approaches emphasize the interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge. While Shannon (1989) criticizes interactionism a strategy-oriented approach, which ignore the purposes of reading or writing. He contrasts it with the "whole language approach" which he sees as

focused on purposes. The term interactionist expresses two essential aspects: (1) the central importance of social interaction in all forms of human communication and (2) the necessity of addressing the complex and dialectical nature of our subject (Bickhard 1987; Rosenblatt, 1985). The use of the term interactionism fits well with the rapid development of “social interaction” in the human sciences particularly in language and cognitive development (Snow, 1983).

Recent collections of works with an interactionist position include Rogoff and Lave (1984); Hickman (1987); Moll (1990); and Diaz and Berk (1992). Benjamin Lee (1987, p.104) summarizes this point of view clearly: “Man lives in a word of meaning because of the systematiciy of language. At the same time, culture is also the context for the evolution of language. The principles that guide the evolution of the mind are the product of socio-historical forces which regiment language in culturally specific was; these in turn determine the development of mind in a never-ending dialetic of mind being in society.”

However, interaction in sociocultural theory emphasizes more on the use of language to mediate the thinking process of learning, especially, between teachers and more capable peers. Language is used a way to provoke thought and lead learners to move to the new zones of proximal development. In other words, interaction leads to development in cognition and learning.

7. Interactions in large classes:

The concept “large class” has been studied and discussed by various researchers. For example, Coleman (1989) studied large classes and English Foreign Language (EFL) learning and raised a question: what is a large or problematic size? This question cannot be simplistically answered. It depends to a great extent on the context and individual experiences and cultural perceptions.

Teaching large classes is one of the major challenges of English teachers. In fact, there are other challenges of teaching a large class; for example, it is difficult to keep good discipline in a large class or teachers cannot easily give each student the individual attention they need or teachers may not have enough teaching and learning aids. Therefore, teaching a large class effectively is hard work, but it is possible to do it even if we are not a big-league entertainer as David (1995, p.51) holds, “Given that class size is most unlikely to be reduced in the foreseeable

future, teachers need to come to terms with their problem.” Besides, Vrasidas and McIsaac (1999) identified four major factors that influenced interaction: (a) structure of course, (b) class size, (c) feedback, and (d) prior experience with computer-mediated communications (CMC).

At the college where I am working, the large classes often consist of more than 40 students. Interaction in these classes is obviously limited. According to Jin and Cortazzi (2013), large classes are widely considered to be problematic for language learning thus research the teaching methods and ways of organizing effective interaction in large classes. Cleek (2005) also points out that teaching large classes is challenging as large classes consist of an extreme range in ability as well as diverse student learning styles. At tertiary level, there have been concerns with issues involved in the teaching of large classes, including teaching quality and whether there are effective learning outcomes for students (Hall, Binney, Kennedy, 2005). So the communicative approach seeks to encourage learners to initiate and participate actively in meaningful interaction (Le, 2002).

Besides, traditional lecturing methods have proved to be problematic in teaching large classes because:

- The attention spans of students are difficult to maintain due to prolonged inactivity;
- Diminished flexibility within the curriculum;
- More difficulty in stimulating higher-level thinking (such as analysis, synthesis, relating key concepts, problem-solving, application and evaluation of ideas).

In other words, in large classes students can feel anonymous and voiceless. The threat of exposing their ignorance is often sufficient to keep their heads down (and focused on some serious texting). As mentioned earlier, teachers in large classes often feel compelled to focus on content delivery.

In Tran’s (2008) study, the author showed that pair work and group work were frequently used by large class teachers. Pair work and group work make it easier for students to be involved in various classroom activities. The positive and pleasant atmosphere will help to realize the notion of learner-centred language teaching. What is more, group work turns the competition between individual students into a race of different groups. In a large class English Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, the advantage of group work may be doubled. On the one hand, too many students make it impossible for the teacher to give proper directions to each of

them, but many students make it easier to share their ideas. With all these merits, group work and pair work are no doubt very reasonable choice in large class EFL teaching.

However in non-English majors classes, there is an obstacle in teacher-learner interaction. Some students may feel anonymous in the lecture and this anonymity may make it harder for them to become motivated to keep up. Another obstacle is that with so many of their peers listening, many students feel too intimidated to ask questions or too overwhelmed by the material to approach instructors or others for help. So the roles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers are really very important as Hedge (1988, p.68) commented the teacher's role will be "to advise, assist, monitor, and keep up motivation". And H. Douglas Brown (2000) pointed out that teacher's roles are often best described in the form of metaphor: teacher as a controller, teacher as an assessor, teacher as a reconciler of methods, teacher as a facilitator.

Also in Tran's (2008) study, the researcher proved the students-teacher interaction could be seen from the students' activity like students' talk-response and students' talk-initiation. The students-students interaction appeared when the students had a discussion activity with their groups or partner. So, it can be concluded that teaching – learning process in non-English class was still in teacher's dominant activity. However, the students were active enough in the classroom interaction. The teacher usually asked some questions related to the material that was intended to the students' responds.

A study by Pica and Doughty (1985) involving adult English Second Language learners compared teacher- learner and learner-learner interaction. Data for the teacher-learner interaction were collected from a whole class discussion of a decision-making task about family planning in the future and data for the student-student interaction came from a group discussion about who should be chosen for a heart transplant from six potential recipients. The study found that teacher-student interaction generated less input for students than student-student interaction, but that the input provided was more grammatical. The teacher produced most of the grammatical input. Students in the teacher-directed context took less turns and produced less language.

For Allwright (1984), it is important to keep learners active in the classroom, which means reducing the amount of teachers talk in classroom and increasing the learner's talk time. Naturally, they will talk to each other through pairs or groups where each learner gets his time to talk. Teachers usually seek to move on from getting learners talking to each other to the more

complex problems of getting them communicating, and that is the result of what is called the communicative approach. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) relies mainly on the value of interaction; person to person encounters. Teachers and learners then should distinguish between interaction and communication; they should not consider them as synonyms, In spite of the fact that many of them consider that communication refers only to people interacting with each other.

7.1. Techniques to enhance classroom interactions

Teacher's roles in classroom activities are probably the most demanding and important factors in terms of the effective classroom management. Teachers can play many roles in the course of teaching. Just as parents are called upon to be many things to their children, teachers should play not only the role which transfers knowledge to students but also be skillful with how to transfer this knowledge successfully and effectively.

Allwright and Bailey (1991:25) stated that through classroom interaction, the plan produces outcomes (input, practice opportunities, and receptivity). The teacher has to plan what he intends to teach (syllabus, method, and atmosphere).

Furthermore, Rivers (1987:6-9) stated that the teacher in teaching learning process should not too focus on the best method, the teacher should be looking for the most appropriate approach, design of materials, or set of procedures in a particular case. The teacher is being flexible, while keeping interaction central; interaction between teacher and learners, learners and teacher, learner and learner, learner and authors of texts, learner and the community that speak the language. The teacher should not be directed and dominated in the classroom. Interaction cannot be one-way, but two-way, three-way or four-way.

The fact that for interaction to take place, "...the teacher must create a climate in which spontaneity can thrive, in which unrehearsed language can be performed, and in which the freedom of expression given over to students makes it impossible to predict everything that they will say and do (Brown, 1994)." Some control on a teacher's part is actually an important element of successfully carrying out interactive techniques. Teacher-directed and dominated classrooms cannot, by their nature, be interactive. It is mandatory for a teacher to take the role of a controller and a facilitator rather than of an authoritarian. Rivers (1987) has claimed that "Real interaction in a classroom requires the teacher to step out of the limelight, to cede a full role to the student in developing and carrying through activities, to accept all kinds of opinions,

and be tolerant of errors the student makes while attempting to communicate.” The teacher as a facilitator focuses on the principle of intrinsic motivation by allowing students to discover language through using it in context rather than telling them about language. At times teacher has to take the least directive role. The teacher has to be there to advice and counsel when the student seeks it. This technique is invariably practiced by experienced teachers in language classes.

In Le & Tran's (2013) article, the researchers suggest teachers could use team work, group work, pair work to manage large classes and improve classroom interaction.

In language classrooms, if the teachers can create the close classroom atmosphere, for example they use a three-part sequential IRE exchange that was mentioned in classroom interaction part, their students are at ease and they will be more self-confident to respond to the teacher's questions because when they see the teacher as their peer, not one in front of the classroom giving direction, they will feel more relaxed, and natural interaction will take place.

7.4 . Putting questions to enhance interactive learning

In non-English major large classes, teachers' questions give students the opportunity to produce comfortably language without having to risk initiating language themselves. Students become afraid when they have to initiate conversation or topics for discussion. However teachers' questions can serve to initiate a chain reaction of student interaction among themselves. Asking a lot of questions in a classroom will not by any means guarantee stimulation of interaction. Certain types of questions may actually discourage interactive learning. For example, too much time spent on ‘display questions’ (question for which the answer is already known to the teacher) -students can easily grow weary of artificial contexts that do not involve genuine seeking of information.

Moreover one of the most important keys to create an interactive language classroom is the initiation of interaction by the teacher. But non-directive the teaching style is, the teacher should provide the stimuli for continued interaction. These stimuli are important in the initial stage of a classroom lesson as well as throughout the lesson. Without such guidance, classroom interaction may indeed be communicative, but students can easily get distracted and move away from the class objectives.

According to Chaudron, (1987) there are two major factors that have been considered in an interactive class room is ‘wait time’, or “...the amount of time the teacher pauses after a

question and before pursuing the answer with further questions or nomination of another student””, and different questioning strategy.

7.5. Interaction through pair work and group work

Pair work is a good way to change the traditional teachers’ talk that dominates the class. Appropriate pair activity-design is part of teachers’ interactive language. Pair work enables teachers to get students engaged in interactive communication within a short period of time, which will increase students’ interests and willingness to participate. Students in pairs can take turns asking questions and giving opinions.

Group activities can also replace the dominant teachers’ talk in class and provides a non-competitive atmosphere, a sense of involvement and a sense of equality. When students are comfortable with their peers instead of listening to teachers’ introduction of the background knowledge, explanation of the text, they become more confident and take more risks. They learn more in groups where they have more opportunities for using English, discussing the target culture, and gaining additional perspectives on their own culture

Besides questioning that promotes communication in a language class are pair work and group work that obviously give rise to interaction. Encouraging students to develop their own strategies is an excellent means of stimulating the learner to develop tools of interaction. Even lecturing and other forms of oral communication and also involving students to read from texts contribute toward the process of creating and maintaining an interactive classroom. Brown (1994) states, “...is a generic term covering a multiplicity of techniques in which two or more students are assigned a ‘task’ that classes involves collaboration and selfinitiated language.” A considerable amount of research has been conducted in recent years into learner interaction, particularly interaction which takes place through group work. Nunan (1991) suggests that learning to speak in a foreign language will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate in groups. According to Harmer (2009) “.... Group work is more dynamic than pair work: there are more people to react with and against in a group and, therefore, there is a greater possibility of discussion.”

In fact, group work activities have allowed teachers to have opportunities of helping students with individual problems which perhaps before has not been a improving the quality of students’ talk. In group activities, the students work with one another, they all help each other to fulfill the handed group task and they must be responsible for their group’s fate (we all

“swim and sink together” here). Therefore, cooperative learning methods also increase students’ responsibility and encourage group members to participate and learn more quickly because group members do real work together and they bring out whatever assistance and encouragement that is necessary to promote each other’s success.

Johnson and Johnson (1987) describe a group as a collection of individuals who are interacting with one another. In terms of group size, it is quite problematic: you can safely divide some groups of six or seven in a class of 40-50 students.

Group work can be extremely helpful in non-English major large classes. The learners, who feel limited to say something in front of the class or the teacher, often find it much easier to express themselves in front of a small group of their peers. When learners work in groups, there is greater chance that at least one member of the group will be able to solve a problem when it arises. One of the major advantages of group work or pair work according to my observation is that “.... It frees the teacher from the usual role of instructor-corrector-controller, and allows him or her to wander freely around the class.... (Ur, Penny.1981). I can give help where needed, assess the performance of individual students by noting language mistakes for future remedial work and devote more time to my slower learners.

8. Operational definition of classroom interactions in the current study:

The review above shows that classroom interactions include teacher-student and student-student communication in the classroom. Classroom interactions comprise of both verbal and non-verbal communication. In this study, classroom interactions are referred to as both channels teacher-student and student-student interactions. They are the exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas via speech between two or more people resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other. Interactions are the medium through which learning and teaching are realized. Interaction in this study refers to face to face classroom, not interaction via the web/internet. It is based on the assumption that through interactions, teachers can deliver their messages to the learner and the learner can decompose the teaching structures and derive meaning from classroom events. Besides, this study is limited to verbal interactions only for several reasons. Firstly, it is more convenient and convincing with data recorded. Secondly, audio recordings of classroom interactions will reveal the patterns and process of classroom interactions. These data when reaffirmed with data from interviews with teachers and students will illustrate clearly how classroom interactions occur and whether there is mismatch between

students and teachers' belief about classroom interactions and the how interactions are actually carried out in the classrooms.

9. Conclusion

In summary, interaction is at the heart of language learning and teaching; it involves learners in face-to-face or teacher-learners encounters in the classroom. Pair or group interaction provides a basis for language learning in general; it gives the learners practice in community and negotiation of meanings through taking turns, in addition to learning other features that are crucial in any interactive discourse such as how to initiate, respond and close conversations.

The two dominant approaches to classroom interactions are interactionism and sociocultural theory. Both approaches emphasizes meaningful interaction among individuals. While the former emphasizes on language input and language as a means of exchanging information, the latter sees language as the greatest motivating force in human development and learning, the process of second-language teaching is grounded. Interaction takes place in a second language classroom determines what learning opportunities the learners get. Teachers and learners together are the contributing source in managing the classroom interaction and at the same time managing these learning opportunities.

The paper has reviewed interactions in large non-English major classes. The review shows that so far almost no studies have been carried out to investigate teachers' and students' belief of interactions in these large classes. It is therefore worth doing a study on the topic.

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