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Teachers' Limited Wait-Time Practice and Learners' Participation opportunities in EFL Classroom Interaction

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Abstract

Pairing theory with methodology, this study demonstrates how EFL teachers' limited wait-time practice structures in and affects the structuring of the unfolding classroom discourse with reference to learners' participation opportunities. Informed by the tenets of conversation analysis, we have observed, videotaped, and transcribed line-by-line 10 EFL teachers' naturally-occurring classroom interaction. Analyses of six episodes from the data suggest that teachers' seemingly inadvertent implementation of limited wait-time tends to reduce learners' interactional space. Moreover, it serves the (dys)function of triggering those interactive practices whose structuring diverts teacher talk from the major pedagogic goal, i.e. increasing leaner participation. The findings of this study can be analytically generalized to the theoretical model of communicative competence. They can also help teachers on their way towards developing their classroom interactional competence.

Keywords: conversation analysis; learner participation; limited wait-time; sociocultural theory.

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Introduction

Successful teaching has one of its roots in 'successful management of the interaction … the *sine qua non* of classroom pedagogy' (Allwright, 1984, p. 159). Interaction is successfully managed when its quality is promoted in the light of desired pedagogic outcomes (Cazden, 1986; Johnson, 1995; Walsh, 2006). In other words, quality interaction which is 'acquisition rich' (Ellis, 1998, p. 145) and acquisition mediative (Walsh, 2011) requires L2 teachers to knowingly manage turn-taking sequences. In this respect, from among the two essential ingredients of 'good teaching', i.e., planning and improvising (van Lier, 1991), the latter has come into the focus of research on classroom interaction; plans, though effective, may not be reflected in process, i.e., the sequential organization of classroom talk-in-interaction, due to the apparently chaotic, or unpredictable, nature of interaction. Therefore, teachers have to make in their use of language online interactive decisions that are appropriate to the moment and are in line with immediate pedagogic objectives and the overall plan (Breen, 1998; Walsh, 2002). When teachers gain sensitivity and awareness in terms of subtle interactional mechanisms at work in classroom talk-in-interaction, they can facilitate learning opportunities in their moment-by-moment decision-makings (Hall, 1998; Nystrand, 1997; Walsh, 2002).

In recent years, a sizeable body of research has been undertaken into the nature of practices in classroom interaction. These studies have dealt with a variety of issues, including questioning (Belhiah, 2011; Seedhouse, 1996), feedback (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Mackey, 2006), turn-taking (Xie, 2011), to name but a few. However, it seems that an interactional practice has been left both under-represented and under-researched; that is wait-time, which refers to the duration of pauses either after a teacher's utterance, typically question, or a student's utterance, particularly response (Rowe, 1974). Although vigorous studies were initially conducted on wait-time and the pronounced positive changes of its extension in both teachers and learners' behaviors were documented, dealing with new dimensions of the issue seems to be neglected over the last two decades. Moreover, the majority of those studies were done in subject matters such as

science, mathematics, physics, etc. Thus, research on the issue within the realm of second language learning and teaching is quite scarce in the literature. Further, even those few studies, which were done within this scarcity, considered wait-time as a dependent variable in a sense that the influence of manipulating other variables was examined on its duration (Shrum, 1985a, 1985b). In contrast, the present study tries to uncover the subtleties of EFL teachers' wait-time implementation as a situated activity in naturally occurring classroom interaction.

As to the conceptual framework, previous studies adopted a cognitive view and pursued the information processing model of learning. According to this model, for learning to occur, a learner must perceive the instructional stimuli, note their occurrence, understand the cognitive processes that are required, use the processes to create or manipulate information to be stored as learned material, and encode the information for later retrieval (Stahl, 1982; Winne & Marx, 1983). Therefore, teachers were supposed to afford learners sufficient time so that learners' internal mechanisms get activated for encoding and decoding the information in the stimuli, i.e., the input. However, within Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory (SCT), which also informs the theoretical significance of this study, learning is conceptualized as participation rather than acquisition (Donato, 2000; Sfard, 1998; Young & Miller, 2004). Opportunities for participation should be 'collaboratively constructed' (Lantolf, 2000, p. 17) 'not as a result of interaction, but in interaction' (Ellis, 2008, p. 526). Moreover, the dialogic nature of interaction should be promoted since dialogue has a 'mediating force' (Ahmed, 1994) in creating the intersubjectivity that the teacher as a more knowledgeable other (MKO) requires to decide upon where to supply, fine-tune, or withdraw scaffolds. The collaborative and dialogic natures of interaction are so essential that they oblige the teacher to afford learners with ample interactional space. Wait-time implementation is actually providing learners with much space, or 'the coveted commodity' (Waring, 2009, p. 818), with which they are to actively trade in classroom interaction.

The contribution of conversation analysis (CA), as the methodological framework, to this study is twofold. On the one hand, it contextualizes the study of wait-time. Previous studies focused

mainly on describing wait-time and calculating its length in relation to fixed imposed-categories of talk; thus, they paid exclusive attention to turns. In this respect, context was regarded as being static since those studies adopted discourse analysis approaches to classroom interaction. This study, however, considers wait-time in a dynamic context, through focusing not only on turns but also on the immediate sequential context in which a turn is produced, that is constantly being formed, shaped and renewed by the participants themselves in their sequential organization of talk-in-interaction (Heritage, 1997). In other words, whereas previous studies assumed an etic, i.e., researcher-relevant, perspective and pursued the consequences of imposing pre-determined categories and presuppositions, the present study takes an emic, i.e., participant-relevant, perspective. Both Levinson (1983) and Seedhouse (2004) make the important point that CA forces the researcher to focus on the interaction patterns emerging from the data, rather than relying on any preconceived notions that language practitioners may bring to the data. Consequently, this study considers wait-time in naturally occurring classroom interaction. On the other hand, the second contribution can be elucidated within the recently emerging field of CA-for-SLA (Markee & Kasper, 2004), the gist of which is to utilize the powerful tools of conversation analysis (CA) to address issues of second language acquisition (SLA). One way to pursue CA-for-SLA perspective is to consciously pair CA, as an empirical research methodology, with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (SCT), as a conceptual framework, and thus acknowledge them as 'useful partners', rather than 'strange bedfellows' (Vine, 2008, p. 673). Many researchers have used CA in combination with the SCT, some including justification for the union of the methodology and the conceptual framework (Mondana & Pakarek Doehler, 2004; Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974; Seedhouse, 2005; Vine, 2008; Waring, 2008; Young & Miller, 2004). For example, Waring (2008) argued that within the sociocultural framework in which learning is conceptualized as participation (Donato, 2000), CA can "detail the instructional practices that either create or inhibit the opportunities for participation … and by extension, the opportunities for learning" (Waring, 2008, p. 577). In other words, "CA has the capacity to examine in detail how opportunities for L2 learning arise in interactional activities" (Kasper,

2006, p. 83). In this respect, we have utilized CA to MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) teachers' interactive practices in naturally occurring classroom interaction and zoom very specifically in on their wait-time practices with reference to learners' participation opportunities.

Alluding to the centrality of teachers' role within learners' learning environment (Walsh, 2006), the current study aims at helping teachers further their general understanding in terms of 'the architecture of classroom interaction' and also acquire rather 'microscopic understanding' (van Lier, 2000a) of how their wait-time implementation links to the structure of classroom interaction and affects learners' participation in the unfolding discourse.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In her attempts to improve 'inquiry behavior' of elementary science students, Rowe (1974a, 1974b, 1978), the architect of wait-time as an instructional variable, worked on the influence of some possibly effective variables through observing and tape recording classes over six years. In fact, she tried to figure out why an 'inquisitional' pattern dominated interactions within such science classes. In this respect, she considered several variables, including teacher's topical knowledge, materials, sample size, program types, student age, and pacing characteristics of various geographical areas, but she found none of them as the main reason behind.

After analyzing over 300 'intact classroom' tape recordings, she noticed that the majority of them shared a common stable property; the pace of instruction was very rapid. In other words, when a teacher asked a question, he or she waited, in most instances, less than one second for a student response. And if the student did not provide the class with an answer, the teacher typically repeated, rephrased or asked a different question, or called on another student. Thus, Rowe labeled the period of silence following a teacher question before a student utterance as wait-time I or post-solicitation wait-time. She observed that mean wait-time I is on the order of one second. Moreover, she detected the second species of wait-time in another location. Wait-time II, also known as post-response wait-time,

pertains to the accumulation of pauses occurring on the student side and terminates when the teacher speaks. She found that after a student makes a response, the teacher normally reacts or asks another question within an average time of nine tenth of a second.

Her analysis of 900 tapes showed that when mean wait-times of both types were increased to three or more seconds as a result of training, pronounced changes could be traced on ten student outcome variables: 1. The length of response increases. 2. The number of unsolicited but appropriate responses increases. 3. Failures to respond decrease. 4. Confidence as reflected in decrease of inflected responses increases. 5. Incidence of speculative responses increases. 6. Incidence of child-child comparison of data increases. 7. Incidence of evidence-inference statements increases. 8. The frequency of student questions increases. 9. Incidence of responses from students rated by teachers as relatively slow increases. 10. The variety in type moves made by students increases. In addition, she considered wait-time as an influencing factor on three teacher outcome variables. Her study indicated that once wait-time is protracted and the behavior is stabilized: 1. Teachers exhibit greater response flexibility as reflected by the occurrence of fewer discourse errors. 2. The number and kind of teacher questions change. 3. Teacher expectations for performance of students rated as relatively slow improves.

Initial reports of these findings paved the way for other researchers of various fields to either replicate Rowe's studies or consider new dimensions of the issue. Some investigated wait-time as a dependent variable (e.g., Gambrell, 1983; Jones, 1980; Shrum, 1985a, 1985b), while others examined the effects of manipulating wait-time, as an independent variable, on teacher and learner variables. In the latter line of research, various designs were utilized. However, the majority used an experimental design, in which a group of trained teachers endeavored to extend wait-time beyond three seconds while a contrast group maintained a normal wait-time (e.g., DeTure & Miller, 1985; Granato, 1983; Swift & Gooding, 1983). As far as subject matter is concerned, the studies included science (DeTure & Miller, 1985; Swift & Gooding, 1983), mathematics (Tobin 1986), language arts (Fagan, Hassler, and Szabo, 1981; Granato, 1983) and social studies

(Honea, 1982), and in terms of grade level, they ranged from kindergarten (Granato, 1983) to high school (Honea, 1982).

As to the concern of the current research, those studies that investigated the effects of wait-time extension on teacher variable reported less teacher talk (Swift and Gooding, 1983; Tobin, 1986), fewer repeated verbal patterns (DeTure & Miller, 1985), asking fewer questions (Fagan et al., 1981; Honea, 1982; Rice, 1977; Tobin, 1986), fewer chain questions (Swift & Gooding, 1983), more higher cognitive level questions (Fagan et al., 1981; Rice, 1977; Tobin, 1986), fewer low level questions (DeTure & Miller, 1985; Swift & Gooding, 1983), more probing questions (Anshutz, 1975; Tobin, 1986), fewer low level reactions (Deture & Miller, 1985; Tobin, 1986), and greater teacher anxiety (Honea, 1982).

The aforementioned studies were situated in a cognitive paradigm viewing learning as a process of decoding and encoding in which a learner receives input from the environment, processes the input inside his or her brain, and produces output. Accordingly, the rationale behind wait-time implementation was for the teacher to get the chance to enrich the quality of input in "repair-driven negotiations" (van Lier & Matsuo, 2000, p. 267) and for the learner to have the time to get the most out of the input and produce better output. However, we have expanded our view of interaction beyond repair-driven negotiations because our study has been done within the framework of the sociocultural theory (SCT) in which learning is conceptualized as participation in classroom interaction (Donato, 2000). In other words, what maximizes learning in this framework is not the amount of comprehensible input but "the opportunities for meaningful action that the situation affords" (van Lier, 2000a, p. 252). In this respect, we have considered wait-time on the grounds that it might affect the quality and quantity of participation in classroom interaction. Since previous studies adopted discourse analysis approaches, their view of classroom interaction was not only limited in scope in a sense that they attended merely to turns but also motivated in its orientation in a way that they allowed researchers to impose their presuppositions in the spirits of the studies. However, we have utilized in this study the methodological power of conversation analysis (CA) for two reasons. On the one hand, it addresses the partial view inherent in the previous

studies; that is, it details teachers' wait-time implementation in the sequential organization of talk-in-interaction which also encapsulates turns as one of its constituents. On the other hand, it has an 'unmotivated looking' (Psathas, 1995, p. 45) that prevents the researchers from 'preformulated theorizing'. Therefore, conversation analytic researchers have to discover and study phenomena in naturally occurring classroom interaction in order for their findings to be deeply grounded in the data.

METHODOLOGY

The tenets of conversation analysis (CA) inform the methodology of this study. Since CA is by definition "the study of recorded, naturally occurring talk-in-interaction" (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, p. 14), the general aspects of its design should contain: (a) getting or making recordings of natural interaction; (b) transcribing the recorded data; (c) analyzing selected episodes; and (d) reporting the research (ten Have, 1999).

Accordingly, the data for this article were taken from a larger corpus of 10 two-hour adult EFL classes that we had video-taped at a language institution in the fall and winter of 2010. These 10 classes were taught by ten different teachers and ranged in level from lower-intermediate through intermediate to upper-intermediate. Concerning gender, six of the teachers were male and four of them were female. The youngest teacher was 23 years old while the oldest was 40. All teachers, except one who studied accounting, had either a BA or an MA in one of the three disciplines involving English, i.e., literature, translation and teaching. Finally, when we were conducting the study, the most experienced teacher was within the profession for 18 years whereas the least experienced one was teaching just for two years. The classes ranged in size from 4 to 14 learners. And they met twice a week mostly in the afternoons. To observe research ethics, we obtained informed consent from all participants of the study a week before entering the classes for collecting data. For collecting natural interaction, we assumed the role of non-participant observers in the classes, i.e. we did not make any attempts to alter the situations being observed, nor did we ask for any additional activities that were not

part of the regular lesson. Nevertheless, we collected the data ourselves through placing a camera on a tripod in the back corner of the classes and standing behind it throughout the whole recordings. We did our best to capture a fuller view of classroom events; although the learners were seated in a semicircle and the classroom size was small, it was impossible to have all events, which were going on in classes, on the camera. However, adding to the number of cameras could, to a large extent, address the problem, but as Mori and Zuengler (2008, p. 23) pointed out, "the more elaborate recording equipment becomes, the more likely it is for the participants to be influenced by its very existence" (cf., Waring, 2009, p. 799). Therefore, in order to mitigate the validity-threatening influence of video-recording, we used just one camera at a fixed place as unobtrusively as possible out of the teachers and the learners' immediate lines of sight.

To meet the second requirement of the conversation analytic design, we transcribed the collected data line-by-line in their entirety using the system developed by Jefferson (1983) with some modifications (see Appendix). Although transcribing the whole data was a laborious task, it had its own advantages. During the process of transcription, we came to notice some aspects of interaction in the data that constituted important parts in later analyses. In the resulting transcripts, various features, including beginnings and endings of turns, the duration of pauses, latching turns, overlapping, intonation, gestures and the like, were documented to make the transcripts as comprehensive and accurate as possible. However, there were some instances where the nonverbal behavior of certain participants became relevant but inaccessible because they had not been caught on our camera.

Since CA views any classroom interaction as consisting of a dynamic and complex series of interrelated contexts whose pedagogical goals and features of language use may change at any moment in a lesson, different researchers of the field have attempted to propose frameworks for identifying and introducing various 'micro-contexts' of classroom interaction (Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Seedhouse, 2004; Van Lier, 1988; Walsh, 2006). This study selected episodes happening within 'meaning and fluency micro-context' of

Seedhouse's (2004). In this micro-context, the teacher's aim is to maximize interaction within the classroom and maximize the learning potential of the classroom context. The main focus is on fluency rather than accuracy and participants are encouraged to express themselves clearly. Turn-taking and topic management are less tightly structured; there is more freedom for learners to self-select and, in general, learners have more interactional space.

Having selected the episodes, we proceeded to analyze them while bearing in our minds one of the major analytical principles of CA; that is, what warrants the validity of analysis is not the frequency of instances, but adequate descriptions of how a certain feature works in a system (Waring, 2008). Finally, the very existence of this paper confirms the last facet of the conversation analytic design, i.e., reporting the research (ten Have, 1999).

ANALYSIS

Meticulous and recurring inspections of the data revealed that the majority of the teacher participants of the study consistently provided their learners with limited wait-time whose implementation and affordance led to the emergence of an obstructive interactional pattern in their classroom interactions. Limited wait-time inappropriately structured in the unfolding discourse those interactive practices whose immediate function is to reduce learners' interactional space and thus obstruct their participation opportunities. The following extracts are taken from the data to illustrate the obstructive interactional pattern and the interactive practices (self-elaboration, self-answering, extended-teacher turns, teacher interruptions, turn completion, teacher echo, closed-ended questions, and explicit positive assessment) triggered by the teachers' limited wait-time practice.

EXTRACT 1 Self-elaboration & Self-answering

	69	T:	*↓yes, that's right. ↓Ok, Sobhan, did you watch the video?*
	70	L3:	*= yes=*
	71	T:	*what was it about?*
	72		*(1.5)*
	73	L3:	*class reunion=*
	74	T:	*°yes, very good. class reunion. So did you like it? >Do we have*
	75		*such customs in Iran?*
	76		*(3.0)*
	77	L5:	*it's not a Custom I think. U:m in ↑Iran =*
→	78	T:	*= yes, it's not a custom because just few people (.) I mean*
	79		*students do that. in fact, they imitate that from western*
	80		*countries. Not all students gather together after ten years, after*
	81		*five years, after university or high school in Iran. But in western*
	82		*countries, it is a custom. ↑yes=*
	83	L5:	*=↓yes=*
	84	T:	*= so everybody (0.5) >have you ever done it yourself? <*
	85		*(1.0)*
	86	L3:	*me=*
	87	T:	*= how? (0.5) after ten years? >What happened?<=*
	88	L3	*= no, after four years my=*
→	89	T:	*=I did it after ten years. You know, my middle school*
	90		*rahnamai ((middle school)) classmates and I promised to meet*
	91		*each after five years. At that time we were just fourteen years*
	92		*old. But when we met each other after ten years, we had (.)*
	93		*$ mustache and beard$.*
	94	LL:	*((laughter))*

To introduce and 'locate' a new activity, this teacher first uses the transitional marker "ok" in line 69 with a falling intonation "↓" announcing the ending of a lesson stage (as a sequence-closing-third; Schegloff, 2007) and the beginning of a new one (i.e., prefacing upcoming talk; Beach, 1993). Since the learners were already assigned to watch the video and do the exercises in their Video Textbook at home, the teacher nominates L3 and launches into checking whether L3 has watched the video or not. In line 73, L3 tells the class the title of the chapter "class reunion" which is confirmed by the teacher's "very good" and a follow-up question "did you like it?" in line 74. This question opens the gate to the meaning and fluency micro-context, so the teacher's aim becomes involving L3 more in interaction. Without waiting for L3 to express his feeling about the video, the teacher poses a referential question with increased speed, " >Do we have such customs in Iran?<" in the same turn (line 74). Here, the teacher affords L3 wait-time of three seconds; post-solicitation wait-time implementation in line 76 gives the space to L5 to take the floor and have initiation in line 77. L5 asserts her opinion "it's not a custom I think" and is about to expand her contribution, as indicated by the rising intonation before her last word in line 77, that the teacher overlooks L5's attempt to elaborate on her response, interrupts her and latches (=) onto a new turn (line 78) in which he orients to L5's contribution and starts to elaborate it himself. Strangely enough, to demonstrate that he has understood L5's contribution and has correctly self-elaborated it and also to insinuate his rights and power in the classroom (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Jacknick, 2011), the teacher ends turn with "↑yes" in line 82. L5 confirms the teacher's 'right' to self-elaborate by uttering "↓yes" with a falling intonation in line 83. Again, the teacher directs another referential question "have you ever done it yourself?" to the whole class in line 84. L3 takes the turn in line 86, orients to the teacher's question and starts responding (in line 88) to the teacher's "what happened?", that the teacher immediately interrupts L3 and answers his own formulated question by recounting his experience of class reunion in an extended turn (line 89) although there is an unfinished TCU (turn constructional unit) in line 88 since there is no period to indicate falling intonation and the transition-relevant point (TRP).

Although the teacher attempted to scaffold a favorable climate for learners to participate in classroom discourse by asking referential questions (lines 74, 75, 84, and 87), he could not sustain and increase their participation opportunities since he did not afford learners enough wait-time to fully contribute and expand their contributions. Xie (2008) reported Zhao's (1998) study which found a considerable number of teachers' self-answers. Zhao maintained that "although saving time, teachers' self-answers led to students' overdependence on teachers" (cf. Xie, 2008, p. 28). Moreover, Hu (2004) found in his study of university-level English classrooms in China that teachers self-answered up to 38.9% of the total questions being asked. In this respect, for teachers to maximize their learners' participation opportunities, they should impede the structuring of self-answering and self-elaboration. One way to do so can be extended wait-time implementation probably with other meaning-making resources.

EXTRACT 2 Extended teacher turn

	38	*T:*	*=↓Ok, when you go to a hotel for reserving a room,*
	39		*what should you do or what do you do for reserving a room?*
	40	*L2:*	*=↑before going?=*
	41	*T:*	*=↑aha=*
	42	*L2:*	*=↑before going we telephone (.) and =*
→	*43*	*T:*	*=↓yes, before going on a trip, you call to that special hotel in*
	44		*that place and then reserve. Sometimes you should pay some*
	45		*money in advance. In advance means before going there, but to*
	46		*most of the people (1.0) will pay after (.) they want to leave*
	47		*that room. They want to leave that place.(1.0) >The whole part*
	48		*of the money will be paid after that, but in advance means pay*
	49		*the whole money before you go and stay there.*
	50	*L1*	*:pay deposit=*

51 T: = yes, "pay deposit". Bravo. Ok, after going there (0.5) what (.),
52 I don't know, do they ask you to give them?=
53 L1: =we give passport (.) u:m ID ↑card=
→ *54 T: = ↓yes, show some identification" like passport, like ID card in*
55 which you have your personal information (.) first name, family
56 name, the city, I don't know, sometimes special number or
57 something like that like. But in Iran, what do we show if we
58 want to reserve a hotel?(.) We show our driving license. Driving
59 license is very useful in Iran. It's not just for driving. Before we
60 have ID cards in Iran, we used driving license instead of ID
61 cards.=

The class is discussing the general topic of going on a trip in which this teacher draws learners' attention to making hotel reservations. He asks the whole class an open question in lines 38 and 39. In line 40, L2 immediately takes the floor to seek clarification, i.e., asking the teacher to clarify what he has said. The teacher uses the short token "*aha*" together with a rising intonation in line 41 not only to announce his acceptance of the second pair part provided by L2, but also to cede him the turn to further contribute. L2 orients to the teacher's question in line 42 and starts formulating a response that the teacher interrupts him. The teacher could have taken the turn without interrupting L2 before L2 uttered the continuer "*and*" in line 42. Before "*and*", there is a point the TCU comes to a possible completion, so speaker transition becomes relevant (Sacks et al., 1974). However, since L2 utters "*and*", the teacher should have waited; thereby, the teacher's question could have projected further learner talk. When the teacher interrupts L2 mid-flow ending in an extended teacher talk in turn 42, the interactional features of his talk in general and his turn-takings in particular diverge from the moment-by-moment pedagogic objectives

and the overall plan, i.e., increasing learners' participation opportunities (Walsh, 2002). The quality of L1's contribution in line 50 indicates that if the teacher, instead of feeding the lines to the learners and sidelining them into the platitudinous role of recipients, had afforded enough interactional space to the learners, they could have increased the quantity of their talk as well. In lines 51 and 52, the teacher shapes a new site for the learners to participate by orienting to the question he has posed at the beginning of this episode. Again, the teacher repeats the 'mode-diverging' practice of interrupting the learners (line 55) due to not waiting for L1 to complete her contribution. The teacher's lecture presentation leaves no interactional space for the learners, nor does it let them acquire agency, drive their own learning, and create such space for themselves (Jacknick, 2011). As to the sequential organization of discourse in the above-extract, learners' limited contributions in comparison with extended teacher turns demonstrate that the teacher cannot reach the pedagogic goal of interaction. Learners are willing to participate in classroom discourse, but the teacher is just concerned with filling in the gaps through latching onto learners' contributions and smoothing over the discourse to advance the discussion. When the teacher does not let the learners to take a communicative action, the teacher becomes the sole player of the game since the learners do not have the space to play a role.

Extract 2 depicted the quantity of talk delivered by the participants in classroom interaction. The teacher's pedagogic goal was to involve learners as shown in his use of referential questions (lines 38, 39, 51, and 52). Thereby, the teacher initiated quality interaction but could not sustain and promote it. In other words, although the teacher invited the learners to take the floor and have active participation through their contributions to the discourse, he did not give them the space to do so (lines 43 and 54). The teacher could have talked less, ceded the turns to the learners and constructed, in collaboration with the learners, a rich environment, if he had given them enough wait-time. Literature on wait-time indicates that teachers can control the quantity of their talk through implementing extended wait-time (Swift & Gooding, 1983; Tobin, 1986).

EXTRACT 3 Turn interruption & Turn completion

	123	*T:*	*↓yeah. I think a little good, ↑yes. >Do you like to eat your food*
	124		*with your hands?< =*
	125	*L2:*	*= ↓yes =*
	126	*L3:*	*= NO ((laughter))*
	127	*T:*	*°sometimes° =*
	128	*L1:*	*= some foods, ↓yes. =*
	129	*T:*	*= some foods, ↓yes. ↑ha=*
	130	*L4:*	*= ↓yes*
	131		*(2.0)*
	132	*L2:*	*it depends u:m for the situation. it's ↑good =*
→	*133*	*T:*	*= if you are alone or with your family, ↓yes, but if you have a lot of 134*
	134		*guests it's very bad. ↑yes =*
	135	*L2*	*=↓yes=*
	136	*L1:*	*= some foods u:m should eat u:m b::y (1.0) with hand=*
→	*137*	*T:*	*= for example fish or rice, ↑yes=*
	138	*L3:*	*= yes =*

This episode is the continuation of a teacher's interaction with the whole class in a warm-up prior to a reading passage entitled "Eating Manners" where the teacher asks a closed-ended question with a quickened pace in lines 123 and 124. L2 immediately latches onto the teacher's turn by uttering "yes" in line 125, but L3 initiates a new turn to disagree. In the follow-up turn (line 127), the teacher takes a neutral stance by softly uttering "°*sometimes*°" since she neither provides a negative evaluation nor a positive one of the two consecutive contributions. This prompts L1 to suggest an alternative response "*some foods, ↓yes*" in line 128. In the next turn (line129), the teacher echoes L1's contribution so that everyone notices it, and then she adds the discourse marker "↑ha" with a rising intonation to project further talk. L4 responds to the teacher's invitation bid by uttering "↓yes" with a falling intonation to publicize her agreement with the teacher's opinion. Here, nobody seizes the turn and thus wait-time of two second naturally occurs. This wait-time paves the way for L2 to initiate a new turn and develop a subtopic "*situation*" in line 132; in this turn, L2 is about to elaborate on his response that the teacher

interrupts him mid-flow by latching onto his turn. L2's turn is ended with a rising intonation showing that he is not finished, but the teacher wrongly overlooks the discourse rule here; she interrupts L2's turn and tries to complete the learner's turn for him in lines 133 and 134. L2's chance to participate in the discourse ends when he affirms the teacher's turn completion but uttering "↓yes" with a falling intonation in line 135. The teacher repeats her interruptions in subsequent turns (lines 137 and 139). When L1 orients to teacher's question posed at the very beginning of this episode and initiates a turn (line 136) to have her contribution in form of illustration, the teacher interrupts her and completes the turn for her by providing examples in line 137.

Completing turns is a feature that is commonly found in mundane conversation, where one speaker anticipates what another speaker is about to say and completes his or her turn, but it is perhaps less desirable as a feature of classroom discourse. In the classroom, it limits the frequency and quality of student contributions, and minimizes learning opportunities. According to Musumeci (1996), "teachers speak more, control the topic of conversation, rarely ask clarification requests, and appear to understand absolutely everything the student say, sometimes before they even say it" (p. 314). However, the teacher could have prevented the inappropriate structuring of interrupting and completing turns, if she had waited a bit. Interruptions and completions structured the sequence in a way that failed to invoke any substantive engagement. In short, neither the sequential nor the interactional aspects of interruption and completion were generous in providing the learners with any space to contribute because their major role is to close the sequence, and in some cases the whole topic, as soon as possible (Schegloff, 2007).

EXTRACT 4 Teacher echo

	533	*T:*	*=↓aha, You USED TO go. (1.0) Alright, ↑thank ↓you >and*
	534		*Hanane, what are your hobbies?< =*
	535	*L3:*	*= ↑now?=*
	536	*T:*	*=now or in the past=*
	537	*L3:*	*=u::m watch ↑television=*
→	*538*	*T:*	*=watch television ((nodding))=*
	539	*L3*	*=read book=*
→	*540*	*T:*	*=((nodding)) read book, ↑aha=*
	541	*L3:*	*= u:m play games=*
→	*542*	*T:*	*=play ↑games=*
	543	*L3:*	*= ride the bike=*
→	*544*	*T:*	*=ride the bike((nodding)), good. ↑and*
	545	*L3:*	*=read books=*
	546	*T:*	*=alright, ↑thank ↓you. You have a lot of hobbies. And how about*
	547		*you Nasrin (.) your hobbies?=*

This short episode is the continuation of a teacher's interaction with individual learners about the "hobbies" they used to have as a child or they have at the moment of interaction. In line 534, the teacher nominates L3 and asks a referential question with quickened speed. L3 seeks clarification in line 535 by uttering "↑now?" with a rising intonation. The teacher immediately clarifies the question he has asked. L3 responds to the teacher's question in line 537, but her phrasal answer" u::m watch television" does not indicate whether it is a past or a present hobby. Regardless of the point, the teacher echoes the response, "watch ↑television" with a rising intonation on the last word. By doing so, the teacher first implicitly suggests that L3's contribution is accepted and, secondly, he asks the learner to give alternative answers by raising his intonation together with nodding. Because the teacher immediately latches onto L3's turns, L3 does not have the space to expand her contributions through narration, description, justification, and the like. Had the teacher implemented wait-time after the learner's responses, he could have taken more appropriate interactive practices and could also have shifted his

concern from collecting as many learner contributions as possible to the quality of the contributions.

Teacher echo is an implicit positive evaluation of a learner's contribution. Whenever teaches repeat a response, they implicitly mark a learner contribution as being accepted. They do not offer opportunities for expansion. When teacher echo becomes prevalent, the three-part IRF turn-taking structure (teacher initiation, student response, teacher feedback) emerges as the standard teaching exchange (Edwards & Westgate, 1994). According to Wells (1993), "triadic dialogue is neither good nor bad; rather its merits –or demerits- depend on the purposes it is used to serve on particular occasions, and upon the larger goals by which those purposes are informed" (p. 95). In other words, while IRF may be necessary and useful in certain contexts, e.g., for the purpose of amplification, clarification, or error correction when the focus is on form and accuracy, it should not be the predominant discourse pattern in meaning and fluency micro-context since it restricts learner opportunities to exercise initiatives (van Lier, 2000b). Moreover, echo is one of the prime reasons for excessive teacher–student interaction; in Extract 4, only L3 and the teacher are involved; other learners are prevented from entering interaction. Therefore, learning potential would have been increased by a judicious silence on the part of the teacher after L3's contribution. In the literature on wait-time, researchers used the term "mimicry" in place of teacher echo. DeTure & Miller (1985) reported that high mimicry rate reduces the quantity and quality of student responses. However, extended wait-time implementation was found to cut off the rate to a considerable extent.

EXTRACT 5 Closed-ended questions

→	*254*	*T:*	*↓ok. Everybody, have you ever sent any email to anybody? (.) I*
	255		*don't know, to your friends, to your teachers, to your classmates, to*
	256		*your BOSSES at work?*
	257	*LL:*	*= yes=*
→	*258*	*T:*	*= Ali, what about you? >I think you've done it too much because*
	259		*you are a university student< a:nd u::m when you have for*
	260		*example some questions, some requests, you just send emails,*
	261		*↑yeah =*
	262	*L13:*	*= ˚yes˚=*
	263	*T:*	*= ↓ok, who did you send it to?=*
	264	*L13:*	*=to a friend=*
	265	*T:*	*=↑aha=*
	266	*L13:*	*= he is in Germany now =*
	267	*T:*	*=oh, in Germany. What does he do? >Is he a university student?<*
	268	*L13:*	*=yes=*
→	*269*	*T:*	*= ↓ok, for example, what <u>sort</u> of request did you make? Just*
	270		*explain one of your emails that you already sent to your German*
	271		*friend. You know,˚ just to <u>help</u> you in this field? Or to send you*
	272		*something? I don't know, to send you some data, article,*
	273		*questionnaire, some (.) CHEMICAL stuff?*
	274	*L13:*	*=send me an article =*

Before assigning the learners a writing task, writing an email to somebody and making a request, for the following session, this teacher tries to hold a brief discussion to define the task and clarify its purpose. The teacher directs a referential question to the whole class in line 254. She could simply have waited after asking, "*Everybody, have you ever sent any anybody?"*, but she starts to provide learners with choices (lines 255 and 256) making the question less probing.

The learners orient to this question and produce a choral response by uttering "yes" in line 257. In the following turn (line 258), the teacher nominates L13 and asks an open question; however, instead of waiting for L13 to take the floor, she immediately and quickly extends the turn to give reasons for why she has nominated L13. Knowingly or unknowingly, the teacher is closing the open question she has already asked in line 258, "*Ali, what about you?*". In line 269, the teacher again asks L13 an open question followed by another prompt in line 270. Here, the teacher should have waited and ceded the turn to the learner or let the learner take the floor, but she breaks the question into a series of closed, lower order questions whose function is to put the expected answer in the learner's mouth.

Extract 5 showed that the rapid pace of interaction led the teacher to unnecessarily paraphrase the questions she asked. She tended to reduce the projection potential, i.e., moving the discourse forward, of the questions by accompanying referential or open-ended questions with closed-ended questions in her paraphrases. As to the literature, one change that has been consistently reported under wait-time implementation is the quality of teacher questioning (Anshutz, 1975; DeTure & Miller, 1985; Fagan et al., 1981; Rice, 1977; Rowe, 1986; Swift & Gooding, 1983; Tobin, 1986). In all these studies, extended wait-time practice led to more probing and cognitive level questions. According to Rowe (1986), "as teachers succeed in increasing their average wait-times to 3 seconds or more, they become more adept at using student responses -possibly because they, too, are benefiting from the opportunity afforded by the increased time to listen to what students say" (p. 45). Rice (1977) and Fagan et al. (1981) confirmed the original finding that increased wait-time results in a cognitively more advanced pattern of teacher questions. Consequently, due to not implementing wait-time, the teacher reduces the probing quality of open questions and thereby reduces opportunities for involvement and restricts learning potential.

EXTRACT 6 Explicit positive assessment (EPA)

	464	T:	= ok, ↑very ↓good. (3.0) ˚ok, thank you.˚ Go back (2.0) to the
	465		next page. ↓Ok, any questions about (.) these two pages?(2.5)↓Ok.
	466		page 83. (2.0) As you see (1.0) here are some advices (1.0) to
	467		improve your health, ↑yes.(1.5) ↓Ok, close your books. $ Maleke
	468		don't look at the article $. ↓Ok, > if you want to improve your
	469		health, if you want to have a very good life without any
	470		disease<↓ok (1.0) what do you do? What do you suggest? Or what
	471		do you do yourself to have a very good life to improve your health?
	472		What do you do? What do you suggest?<
	473		(1.0)
	474	L1:	= exercise=
→	475	T:	=↑very ↓good. Regular ↑exercise.=
	476	L1:	=drinking=
→	477	T:	= ↓yeah, excellent. Drinking for example water. Thank you
	478		Samane.˚ Maleke (.) what do you suggest? What do you do
	479		yourself to improve your health?
	480	L2:	=go to the walking every u:m =
→	481	T:	=↑very ↓good, go walking. Take a walk (0.5) every day maybe.
	482		↑Good.=
	483	L2:	= relaxing =
→	484	T:	= very good, relaxing or resting., ↑very ↓good. ˚thank you˚.
	485		↓Ok, now open your books a::nd Sara (.) you start reading.

This teacher tries to involve students in classroom interaction before starting to cover a reading passage in their textbook about "improving one's health". He asks the whole class a referential question (line 468 to 472). After a second, L1 orients to the teacher's question and initiates an answer, "*exercise*", in line 473. L1's response is positively evaluated by the teacher through latching and uttering the positive feedback token *"↑very ↓good*" in line 475. The teacher does not wait for L1 to elaborate on her contribution. The teacher ends her

turn (line 475) by raising her intonation on the last word "*regular ↑exercise*" which compels L1 to give an alternative answer. Again, the teacher immediately affords L1 in line 477 an explicit positive assessment (EPA), "*↓yeah, excellent"*, which does not let L1 expand her response. Moreover, the teacher's use of explicit positive assessment closes the sequence, i.e., interaction with L1. The teacher again nominates another student (L2) and directs the question to her (line 478). Here, the same pattern of interaction is repeated; that is, the learner gives responses (lines 480 and 483), and the teacher positively evaluates the response without waiting for the learner's elaborations (lines 481 and 484). Finally, the teacher's last use of EPA," *↑very ↓good*" in line 484 closes the whole case, i.e., negotiation beyond this point is neither necessary nor warranted.

In his description of the structure of classroom discourse, Mehan (1979) focused a great deal on the three-part IRF sequence. He argued that positive evaluation of a student's reply is a 'terminal act' which signals "the final boundary of a sequence, ending one and signaling that another is to begin" (p. 64). He posited that negative evaluation, on the other hand, could be seen as a 'continuation act', indicating to the other students that an acceptable second part of the sequence had yet to be offered. Waring (2008) similarly found that the production of "explicit positive assessments" closes instructional sequences to further student participation by marking the initial student response as the correct answer. As indicated in the above-extract, the teacher's use of EPAs neither promises nor invites any elaboration. As Schegloff (2007) pointed out, sequences with preferred second pair parts are "closure-relevant", whereas sequences with dispreferred second pair parts are "expansion-relevant" (p. 117). In other words, although EPAs are affectively approved, they may be pedagogically and developmentally disapproved, especially when they are not "meaningful and authentic, i.e., in tune with what a teacher hopes to accomplish in his or her teaching goal(s)" (Wong & Waring, 2009, p. 202). Rowe (1974b) also documented this interactive practice under the title of 'rewarding pattern'. She reported that frequent verbal rewards might encourage premature termination of search, namely, a disposition to choose the first alternative that comes to mind on the chance of a quick pay-off. Moreover, she noted that a high rate of

sanctioning could conceivably discourage sharing of ideas among students. As a result, teachers can postpone EPAs and make them more 'meaningful', if they implement extended wait-time.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have attempted to show how teachers' limited wait-time practice unfolds the structuring of naturally occurring classroom interaction with reference to learners' participation opportunities. To do so, we paired sociocultural theory (SCT), specifically its conceptualization about learning as participation, with the methodological power of conversation analysis (CA) in portraying how opportunities for participation are created in classroom talk-in-interaction. In this respect, we video-recorded 10 two-hour adult EFL classes, transcribed them line-by-line, and selected and analyzed episodes that happened within Seedhouse's (2004) meaning and fluency micro-context. Analyses of the extracts have demonstrated that limited wait-time plays a space-closing role in the sequential organization of interaction; that is, it reduces the interactional space that learners need to initiate, take, and hold turns, to have contributions and elaborate on them, and to actively participate in classroom interaction. Moreover, teachers' limited wait-time implementation tends to affect the online interactive decisions they make in the unfolding discourse. When they afford learners limited wait-time, their language use gets pregnant with those interactive features, or 'interactures', whose birth separates teacher talk from the main pedagogic goals of a lesson because they are born out of place. Such interactures (self-elaboration, self-answering, extended-teacher turns, turn interruptions, turn completion, teacher echo, closed-ended questions, and explicit positive assessment), triggered by the teachers' limited wait-time practice, are inappropriate when the focus is on meaning and fluency. Therefore, teachers' limited wait-time practice together with their subsequent interactive decisions tends to obstruct learners' participation opportunities.

In theoretical terms, this study furthers a bit existing understandings of what Walsh (2011) keeps referring to as the 'fifth skill', after speaking, listening, reading and writing, to highlight its importance; that is interactional competence. Since the

anthropological linguist Dell Hymes (1967, 1972) coined and introduced the notion 'communicative competence' in response to the formal theories of Chomsky (1957, 1965), several models have been proposed (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, 1995; Celce-Murcia et al., 1995) to identify the nature of communicative competence through specifying its components. Such models did not take interactional competence into account. However, Alcón Soler and Safont Jordà (2007) included in their book a chapter by Celce-Murcia in which she revised her 1995 models and proposed a new one to describe communicative competence for language teachers. The model has included interactional competence as one of the key components along with sociocultural competence, discourse competence, linguistic competence, formulaic competence, and strategic competence. In her model, the interactional competence itself consists of three sub-components: actional competence, conversational competence, and non-verbal or paralinguistic competence. She has also tried to identify the micro-components of the three sub-components. However, she has not taken wait-time into account. Grounded in the data and the findings of our study, we believe that wait-time should be incorporated into the model as a micro-component of the non-verbal or paralinguistic competence due to its significant role in oral interaction, particularly its perceptible interactions with other interactive features. In this respect, the findings of this study are analytically generalized to the above-mentioned theoretical model.

We hope that the findings of this study help teachers on their way towards developing their classroom interactional competence (CIC), i.e., "ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning" (Walsh, 2006, p. 132), since they seem to be relevant to various aspects of CIC identified and proposed by Walsh (2006, 2011). First, they further teachers' interactional awareness. By knowing the nature of limited wait-time and its impact on the structure of classroom interaction, teachers can gain closer understandings of the relationship between pedagogic goal, language use and learning opportunity. Therefore, teachers should recognize that their limited wait-time implementation is among the reasons why their language use and the specific pedagogic goals of the moment are not at one, and

why an obstructive interactional pattern keeps emerging in their classroom interaction. A second feature of CIC is that it facilitates interactional space. As long as limited wait-time closes down the space, teachers should increase the duration of wait-time so that learners have adequate space to participate in the discourse and have contributions of high quality in large quantities. Third, the interactionally-competent teacher is able to shape learner contributions through scaffolding, seeking clarifications, repairing learner input, etc. Extracts 1, 3, and 4 have demonstrated that the effectiveness of teachers' 'follow-up moves', in the context of classroom interaction is negatively influenced by limited wait-time because its implementation makes teachers obsessed with filling in the gaps and keeping the flow of discourse smooth; that is why such teachers suffocate learner contributions, instead of shaping them, in their 'F-moves' through self-elaboration, self-answering, turn interruptions, turn completion, and echoing. Therefore, for teachers to shape learner contributions, they should extend wait-time happening between 'R' (learner response) and 'F' (teacher follow-up comment) so that they can have the chance to fine-tune the 'F' in light of the 'R'. Finally, CIC makes use of effective eliciting strategies. This study has indicated that wait-time also affects the quality of teacher questions (see Extract 5). If questions are combined with limited wait-time, their potential for involving learners seems to wane, even though they are referential. Consequently, teachers can add to the effectiveness of their questions through internalizing extended wait-time in their language use.

In closing, this article has by no means depicted the whole picture of teachers' limited wait-time practice in classroom talk-in-interaction. Since this study just considered the consequences of its implementation on teachers' subsequent interactive practices, further studies should explore in more detail the subtleties of its implementation and its possible impacts on learners' interactive practices. Moreover, further research should examine the structuring of extended wait-time practice in the sequential organization of classroom interaction. Last but not least, wait-time is not traceable just in meaning and fluency micro-context, so future research is warranted to investigate this interactive practice in other micro-contexts.

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APPENDIX

Transcription glossary adapted from Jefferson (1983) with some modifications

(.)	untimed perceptible pause within a turn
underline	stress
CAPS	very emphatic stress
↑	high pitch on word
.	sentence-final falling intonation
?	yes/ no question rising intonation
,	phrase-final intonation (more to come)
:	lengthened vowel sound (extra colons indicate greater lengthening)
=	latch (direct onset or no space between two unites)
→	highlights point of analysis
[ ]	overlapped talk; in order to reflect the simultaneous beginning and ending of the overlapped talk, sometimes extra spacing is used to spread out the utterance
˚soft˚	spoken softly/ decreased volume
> <	increased speed
( )	(empty parentheses) transcription impossible
(words)	uncertain transcription
(3)	silence; length given in tenth of a second
$words$	spoken in a smiley voice
(( ))	comments on background, skipped talk or nonverbal behavior
{(( )) words.}	{ } marks the beginning and ending of the simultaneous occurrence of the verbal/ silence and nonverbal; absence of { } means that the simultaneous occurrence applies to the entire turn.
"words"	words quoted, from a textbook for example
T	teacher

L1: L2: etc.,	identified Learner
LL	several learners at once or the whole class