TEACHER TALK IN EFL: LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATIVE AND PEDAGOGICAL PURPOSES

1st British Council
New Directions in English Language Assessment in Latin America

MEXICO CITY
March 21, 22 and 23, 2019
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Foreign language teacher talk encompasses functions beyond communication for general purposes, such as the orientation of tasks and the provision of feedback (Almeida Filho, 1992; Cullen, 1998; Consolo, 2000; Elder, 2001);

“Linguistic-communicative-pedagogic proficiency” (Consolo, 2011a, 2011b; Consolo & Teixeira da Silva, 2014, 2016);

However, in Brazil, several language students still believe that high levels of language proficiency (for general purposes) are sufficient to work as a language teacher (Rodrigues, 2016).
Proficiency Examination for Foreign Language Teachers

- **Target:** teachers and teachers-to-be of Foreign Languages (English) in Brazil;
- **Format:** paper-based (2008-on), electronic (2011-on);
- **Skills:** speaking, listening, writing and reading (integrative approach);
- **Duration:** oral test = 25 min, written test = 2h.
Are there any evidences that the ability to use metalanguage for pedagogical purposes is related to the ability to use the language for general purposes?

**Aims of the study:**

- Verify the difference between teachers’ ability to use the language for general and pedagogical purposes;
- Verify the difference between the performance samples of the aforementioned abilities and teachers’ proficiency holistic grading.
THE RESEARCH STUDY ( II )

▶ Quali-quantitative methodology:
▶ Qualitative methods: structuring of criteria;
    ▶ Better comprehension of criteria, attributes and their connections;
    ▶ Step I: Definition of values – what is important in a decision context;
    ▶ Step II: Decision opportunities structuring;
    ▶ Step III: Alternatives generation – possibilities to solve a problem situation.
THE RESEARCH STUDY (III)

- Quali-quantitative methodology:
- **Quantitative methods**: variables comparison;
  - Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test (**T**): ordinal qualitative variables – candidates’ ability to use the language for general and pedagogical purposes;
  - Cochran’s Q Test (**Q**) with 2 degrees of freedom: (df=2); candidates’ abilities to use the language and their grading;
- Software: Bioestat 5.3;
- Significance level: 5% (**α**=0.05).
RESEARCH DATA

- Spoken data: oral test of the EPPLL [E] examination (2015 and 2017);
  - 2015: electronic version;
  - 9 candidates: undergraduate students of Letters from a public university in the state of Sao Paulo (Brazil);
  - 2017: face-to-face version;
  - 11 candidates: undergraduate students of Letters from a public university in the state of Sao Paulo;
  - 13 candidates: undergraduate students of Letters from a public university in the state of Minas Gerais (Brazil);
Based on the EPPLE’s oral proficiency scale (CONSOLO & TEIXEIRA DA SILVA, 2014):

- Strategic objective: assess the ability to use the language for general and pedagogical purposes;
  - Fundamental objective 1: assess the ability to use the language for general purposes;
  - Means objectives: assess the provision of experiences, assess the use of linguistic structures (grammar and vocabulary).
Based on EPPLE’s oral proficiency scale (CONSOLO & TEIXEIRA DA SILVA, 2014):

- Strategic objective: assess the ability to use the language for general and pedagogical purposes;
  - Fundamental objective 2: assess the ability to use the language for pedagogical purposes;
  - Means objectives: assess the expression of knowledge concerning linguistic rules; assess the selection of information to solve linguistic doubts; assess the provision of explanation to linguistic rules; assess the use of specific terminology.
CANDIDATES’ ORAL PERFORMANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GENERAL-PURPOSE PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>PEDAGOGICAL-PURPOSE PERFORMANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less adequate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>21 (17.5)</td>
<td>67.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More adequate</td>
<td>10 (13.5)</td>
<td>32.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
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RELATIONS AMONG VARIABLES: GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE

- Wilcoxon Rank-Signed Test (T):
  - There is statistically significant evidence that median performance concerning the ability of language use for general and pedagogical purposes is different ($T = 5, p_{bil} = 0.0382$).

- Qualitative analysis:
  - Higher levels of pedagogical proficiency do not necessarily follow higher levels of general proficiency.
RELATION AMONG VARIABLES: GRADING AND PERFORMANCE

- Cochran’s Q Test (Q):
  - There is evidence of lack of statistically significant difference among candidates’ grading and holistic performance ($Q = -2.1742; p = 0.3372$);

- Qualitative analysis:
  - Higher levels of pedagogical proficiency when following similar levels of general proficiency join satisfactory performances regarding speech clarity, use of grammar (not necessarily complex, but with no significant interference in oral production) and use of varied lexical structures.
In summary:
Higher levels of general proficiency are related to higher levels of pedagogical proficiency. Higher levels of pedagogical proficiency are, however, also related to lower levels of general proficiency, especially concerning the knowledge and use of grammar.
FINAL REMARKS

Our research study results challenge the efficiency of canonical proficiency grading models (IWASHITA, 2010), mainly based on the precise use of linguistic elements, to assess teacher talk. Therefore, they also pose a challenge to the validity of the use of generic examinations to assess teacher talk. Consequently, our results endorse the need to develop proficiency scales, tasks and exams especially concerned not only with communication *per se*, but also with the use of language for pedagogical purposes.
REFERENCES (I)


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