

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



AUTHORS:

- ▶ Douglas Altamiro Consolo
- ▶ UNESP – State University of Sao Paulo – Brazil
 - ▶ douglas.consolo@unesp.br
- ▶ Camila Sthéfanie Colombo
- ▶ IFSP – Federal Institute of Sao Paulo – Brazil
 - ▶ colombo_camila@hotmail.com



LANGUAGE TEACHER PROFICIENCY

- ▶ 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).



THE EPPLE EXAMINATION



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.



THE RESEARCH STUDY (I)

- ▶ 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;
 - ▶ **Value-Focused Thinking** (KEENEY, 1992, 1994, 1996):
 - ▶ 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% ($\alpha=0.05$).



RESEARCH DATA

- ▶ Spoken data: oral test of the EPPLÉ 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);



ORAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: DEFINITION

- ▶ Based on the EPPLÉ'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 I: 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).



ORAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: DEFINITION

- ▶ 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

	GENERAL-PURPOSE PERFORMANCE		PEDAGOGICAL-PURPOSE PERFORMANCE	
	f	%	f	%
Less adequate	0	-	0	-
Adequate	21 (17.5)	67.74	14 (17.5)	45.16
More adequate	10 (13.5)	32.26	17 (13.5)	54.84
TOTAL	31	100	31	100



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.



RESEARCH STUDY RESULTS

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 specifically concerned not only with communication *per se*, but also with the use of language for pedagogical purposes.



REFERENCES (I)

- ▶ ALMEIDA FILHO, J. C. P. O professor de língua estrangeira sabe a língua que ensina? A questão da instrumentalização lingüística. **Contexturas**, n. 1, p. 77-85, 1992.
- ▶ CONSOLO, D.A. **Avaliação da proficiência linguístico-comunicativa-pedagógica do professor de línguas**: operacionalização de construto no Exame de Proficiência para Professores de Língua Estrangeira (EPPLE). Projeto trienal de pesquisa – ETAPA I. São José do Rio Preto: UNESP, 2011a. O
- ▶ CONSOLO, D.A. **Avaliação da proficiência linguístico-comunicativa-pedagógica do professor de línguas**: operacionalização de construto no Exame de Proficiência para Professores de Língua Estrangeira (EPPLE). Projeto trienal de pesquisa – ETAPA II. São José do Rio Preto: UNESP, 2011b. O
- ▶ CONSOLO, D.A. Revendo a oralidade no ensino/aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras. **Revista de Estudos Universitários**, v. 26, n. 1, p. 59-68, 2000. O
- ▶ CONSOLO, D.A.; TEIXEIRA DA SILVA, V. L. Em defesa de uma formação linguística de qualidade para professores de línguas estrangeiras: o exame EPPLE. **Horizontes de Linguística Aplicada**, ano 13, n. 1, p. 63-87, 2014. O
- ▶ CONSOLO, D.A.; TEIXEIRA DA SILVA, V. L. Foreign Language Teacher's Proficiency: The Implementation of the EPPLE Examination in Brazil. In: GITSAKI, C.; COOMBE, C. **Current issues in language evaluation, assessment and testing**: research and practice. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016. O
- ▶ CONSOLO, D.A.; TEIXEIRA DA SILVA, V. L. The TEPOLI Test: Construct, Updated Tasks and New Parameters to Assess EFL Teachers' Oral Proficiency. In: CONGRESSO INTERNACIONAL DA ABRAPUI, 1, 2007, Belo Horizonte. **Anais do I Congresso Internacional da ABRAPUI**. Belo Horizonte: Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2007. p. 1-12.
- ▶ CULLEN, R. Teacher talk and the classroom context. **ELT Journal**, v. 52, p. 179-187, 1998. O
- ▶ CUOGHI, K. G.; LEONETI, A. B. A group MCDA method for aiding decision-making of complex problems in public sector: The case of Belo Monte Dam. **Socio-Economic Planning Sciences**. In Press, 2018.



REFERENCES (II)

- ▶ CUOGHI, K. G.; LEONETI, A. B. A group MCDA method for aiding decision-making of complex problems in public sector: The case of Belo Monte Dam. **Socio-Economic Planning Sciences**. In Press, 2018.
- ▶ ELDER, C. Assessing the language proficiency of teachers: are there any border controls? **Language Testing**, v. 2, n. 1, p. 149-170, 2001. O
- ▶ KEENEY, R. L. Value-Focused Thinking: Identifying Decision Opportunities and Creating Alternatives. **European Journal of Operational Research**, v. 92, p. 537-548, 1996. O
- ▶ KEENEY, R. L. Creativity in decision-making with Value-Focused Thinking. **Sloan Management Review**, v. 35, n. 4, p. 33-41, 1994. O
- ▶ KEENEY, R. L. **Value-Focused Thinking: A Path to Creative Decisionmaking**. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992. O
- ▶ KEENEY, R. L.; MCDANIELS, T. L. Value-Focused Thinking about Strategic Decisions at BC Hydro. **Interfaces**, v. 22, n. 6, p. 94-109, 1992.
- ▶ RODRIGUES, L. C. B. A formação do professor de língua estrangeira no século XXI: entre as antigas pressões e os novos desafios. **Signum: Estudos de Linguagem**, v. 2, n. 19, p. 13-34, 2016. O



Thank you.

douglas.consolo@unesp.br
colombo_camila@hotmail.com

