Evaluating opportunities in Dutch EFL course books for developing pre-vocational learners' oral interactional ability

Author(s)
van Batenburg, Eline SL; Oostdam, Ron J; van Gelderen, Amos JS; Fukkink, Ruben G; de Jong, Nivja

DOI
10.1177/1362168818804258

Publication date
2020

Document Version
Final published version

Article

LANGUAGE TEACHING RESEARCH

Language Teaching Research
2020, Vol. 24(4) 434–455

DOI: 10.1177/1362168818804258
journals.sagepub.com/home/ltr
SAGE

Evaluating opportunities in Dutch EFL course books for developing pre-vocational learners' oral interactional ability

Eline SL van Batenburg
Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands

Ron J Oostdam
Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, and University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Amos JS van Gelderen
University of Amsterdam, and Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands

Ruben G Fukkink
Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, and University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Nivja H de Jong
Leiden University, The Netherlands

Abstract

Course materials play a vital role in the foreign language classroom. Relatively little attention has been paid, however, to analyzing the activities that foster oral interactional ability in course materials for English as a foreign language (EFL). For the purpose of this study, a coding scheme was designed that focuses specifically on the development of interactional ability. This was used to analyse the three most commonly used EFL course books for pre-vocational learners in the Netherlands. The analysis revealed that course books focus more on developing language knowledge than on developing the ability to use this knowledge in interaction, that interactional

Corresponding author:
Eline SL van Batenburg, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE), P.O. Box 1025, Amsterdam, 1000 BA, The Netherlands.
Email: e.van.batenburg@hva.nl

strategies practice is missing, and that interactional practice is limited to the personal and public context. We conclude that EFL course books lag behind current theories of second language acquisition (SLA) in the practical application of activities focused on developing interactional ability. Recommendations to strengthen the link between theory and practice are made.

Keywords
coursebook analysis, EFL oral interaction, interactional context, interactional strategies, language knowledge, language use, pre-vocational education

I Introduction

Since the introduction of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the 1970s consensus amongst practitioners has grown that the primary goal of language teaching is to enable learners to engage both in written and spoken communication in order to achieve real-life goals. Mastering the grammatical and structural features of a language is no longer goal in itself, but is considered necessary to interact and communicate in the foreign language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Despite this consensus, implementing CLT curricula in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) has not been without problems (e.g., Ahmad & Rao, 2012; G. Ellis, 1996), in particular with reference to teaching oral communication (e.g., Chen & Goh, 2011). In teaching oral communication, teachers must develop learners' ability to produce speech that is not only appropriate to the context, but is also accurate, fluent and complex enough to communicate messages successfully in real-life situations (see, for example, Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012). Since working memory is limited, and L2 speakers cannot pay attention to all these aspects at the same time (Skehan, 1998), selecting or designing learning activities that foster each of these aspects is particularly challenging for teachers (see Foster & Hunter, 2017). With regards to teaching oral interaction, teachers must furthermore find ways to help learners deal with the reciprocity of oral interaction, and the time-constraints that govern this type of interaction in real life. This adds to the complexity of their teaching task.

In the Netherlands, oral interaction was introduced as an official goal for EFL teaching in 1986 (Kwakernaak, 2016). Exam programmes list attainment targets for performing a range of communicative language functions, and for learning strategies to help achieve interactional goals and to compensate for deficiencies in language - or communicative knowledge (College voor Toetsen en Examens, 2017). However, EFL teachers indicate that they lack the methodological tools for developing their learners' oral skills when faced with large classes and limited contact time (Fasoglio, 2015; Jansma & Pennewaard, 2014). Teachers make limited use of the target language as the language for instruction, and make little use of opportunities for life-like interaction, particularly for practicing meaning negotiation and other functional communication strategies (Bonnet, 2002; Educational Inspectorate, 2004). Meanwhile, becoming competent in interaction is important to learners in the lower pre-vocational tracks. Pre-vocational education offers a four-year programme at secondary school level, during which learners follow a basic curriculum (languages, sciences, humanities, arts, technology, PE) in the first two

years and practical vocational training aimed at a specific occupational sector in the last two years. This practical training is complemented with the core subjects Dutch (L1) and English (L2). Once completed, these learners are headed for further vocational education and employment at middle-management levels, where they will use English for occupational purposes, i.e., in service encounters with non-Dutch customers as part of their job (see Liemberg & Van Kleunen, 1998). At present, learners are reportedly too hesitant to engage in EFL oral interaction, and at times fail to meet the required level of accuracy and fluency upon entering vocational programmes (Jansma & Pennewaard, 2014).

Language education in the Netherlands is predominantly course book-led (Educational Inspectorate, 2004; Kwakernaak, 2008). Although individual language teachers might adapt or complement coursebook activities of their own accord, this means that the coursebooks largely determine the pedagogies available to teachers and practice opportunities available to learners. The main aim of this study, therefore, is to analyse to what extent widely-used, commercially produced EFL teaching materials in the Netherlands help prepare pre-vocational learners for oral interaction in real-life situations.

Over the years, interactional competence has been considered from different perspectives. Bygate (2001) defines oral communicative ability as 'the ability to use formal linguistic resources (vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, grammatical features, phonological features) to express ideational, interpersonal and discoursal meanings, in order to achieve communicative goals in real contexts' (p. 23). Celce-Murcia (2007) defines interactional competence as the ability to convey and understand communicative intent by performing discourse functions, as well as the ability to manage a conversation and to produce and interpret non-verbal communication. Young (2011) highlights the co-constructed nature of interaction and emphasizes the importance of individual speakers' awareness of their role in interaction and the context in which this is situated. Byram, Holmes and Savvides (2013) call attention to the role that cultural context plays in determining how speakers' messages are interpreted and perceived. What these perspectives have in common is that they all recognize that the purpose of engaging in oral interaction is to establish meaningful communication between speakers in specific real-life contexts.

Developing the ability to do so in a foreign language is not easy. First, oral interaction is mediated by time constraints. This requires speakers to conceptualize, formulate and articulate messages more or less in parallel (Levelt, 1989), which makes oral interaction cognitively taxing (Bygate, 1987; Skehan, 1998). Second, interaction is reciprocal. This requires speakers to both produce and understand messages in real time, to adjust these messages to their speech partner's understanding, and to manage the interactional encounter itself (Bygate, 1987). While interactional encounters are largely steered by employing informational and interactional routines, improvisational skills are needed when such routines falter (Bygate, 1987; Kurtz, 2011, 2015). In addition to linguistic knowledge (e.g., vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and grammatical features) and the ability to use this knowledge in real time and in specific contexts, oral interaction also requires a set of self-supporting and other-supporting strategies that help speakers address communicative problems (see Canale, 1983; Celce-Murcia, 2007). Although such strategies are also employed in L1 interaction, effective use of these does not automatically transfer to L2 interaction (e.g., De Bot, 1992; Kormos, 2006).

In sum, oral interaction hinges on speakers' linguistic knowledge, their ability to use this knowledge in real-time, their ability to do so appropriately in specific contexts and their ability to employ strategies aimed at addressing potential communication problems. These four aspects will now be discussed.

1 Developing language knowledge

Interactional ability requires learners to have grammatical and lexical knowledge (e.g., Celce-Murcia, 2007) aimed specifically at fulfilling an array of communicative functions (Criado & Sánchez, 2009; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This requires noticing how certain language features function in interaction (Schmidt, 1990), e.g., by first drawing learners' attention to language features in modeled interaction, or by first noticing the need for specific language forms during actual interaction (Long, 1996) or task performance (Swain, 1985). Integrating language knowledge into the learners' knowledge base furthermore requires repeated practice. Since the language knowledge serves as a means to communicate, this practice should be interactive, meaningful and focused on task-essential forms (Ortega, 2007). The development of language knowledge is further enhanced by obtaining corrective feedback on language use (e.g., Lyster & Saito, 2010). To develop learners' language knowledge for interactional purposes, reflection and feedback should not only focus on learners' correct use of language forms, but also on the extent to which learners are able to achieve the communicative goal using specific language forms (Ellis, 2009), and on enriching and expanding on the language forms used by learners during interaction (Kurtz, 2011).

2 Developing the ability to use language knowledge

In addition to language knowledge, learners must develop the ability to use that knowledge while meeting natural processing demands, i.e., taking account of time constraints and reciprocity in interaction (e.g., Segalowitz & Lightbown, 1999). Thornbury (2005) posits that the problem for speakers is not so much a lack of knowledge, but the unavailability of that knowledge during real-time, interactive talk. Learners thus need frequent opportunity to practice retrieving their language knowledge under real-life processing conditions. This requires engaging in extended and challenging discourse that focuses primarily on meaning-making, i.e., discourse that is both linguistically and cognitively demanding (Lightbown, 2008; Segalowitz & Lightbown, 1999), that serves a clear communicative purpose beyond interacting alone, that is concerned with a genuine exchange of meaning between speech partners (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005) and that engages learners in spontaneous, improvised speech in carefully orchestrated, but at least partially unpredictable situations (Kurtz, 2011, 2015; Perone, 2011; Sawyer, 2004, 2011).

Because real-life interaction is mediated by time-constraints, speakers have to attend to conceptualization, formulation and articulation of the message in parallel. This means that learners' attentional resources will be thinly stretched, and trade-off effects between dimensions of accuracy, fluency and complexity are likely to occur (e.g., Skehan, 1998). Lightbown and Spada (1990) and Skehan (1998), for example, demonstrate than an explicit focus on developing accurate language use tends to come at the expense of

developing fluency in interaction. Furthermore, focusing on form while learners' cognitive resources are occupied with a focus on meaning has adverse effects on accurate language use (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Several measures can be taken to free up learners' attentional resources. For instance, giving learners time to plan the formulation of their messages prior to speaking has beneficial effects on all three dimensions of speech, i.e., accuracy, fluency and syntactic complexity (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996). These effects are most noticeable tasks that are cognitively demanding. Undemanding tasks provide little scope for planning time effects (Foster & Hunter, 2017). The anticipation of having to carry out post-task work, such as a transcription activity, helps learners pay more attention to accuracy, without losing the focus on fluency and complexity during actual task performance (Foster & Skehan, 2013). Being able to repeat the same or a similar task after having reflected on initial task performance and possibly having received additional input and practice (i.e., delayed task repetition) also helps free up attentional space. Effects of task repetition have been reported on accuracy (Bygate, 1996; Lynch & Maclean, 2001), fluency (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; Bygate, 2001; De Jong & Perfetti, 2011), complexity (Bygate, 2001), on measures of complexity, accuracy and fluency simultaneously (Sample & Michel, 2015; Wang, 2014) and additionally on pronunciation (Lynch & Maclean, 2001). In all, task repetition counters the transitory 'one-off' nature of speech, which helps learners progress after their initial attempt (Bygate, 2001; Skehan, 1998).

3 Developing interactional strategies

Competent speakers possess an array of interactional strategies that help them safeguard mutual understanding and address interactional problems when needed (e.g., Dörnyei & Kormos, 1998). Self-supporting strategies are used to overcome problems in speech production and reception, and include both compensation strategies such as message reduction, -substitution and –reconceptualization and meaning negotiation strategies, such as checking and indicating understanding, uncertainty and incomprehension and asking for elaboration, clarification and repetition of the message (e.g., Bygate, 1987; Dörnyei & Scott, 1995). To ensure mutual understanding, successful interaction also requires speakers to possess other-supporting strategies, i.e., attentive listening, aligning messages to the speech partner's need for information, topic knowledge and understanding, and responding to clarification requests, indications of incomprehension and erroneous interpretations of the message (see Bygate, 1987). Beneficial effects of interactional strategy instruction have been confirmed in several studies, e.g., on general proficiency (Lam, 2006), the degree of participation in interactional encounters (e.g., Bejarano et al, 1997), the quality of the interaction (e.g., Nakatani, 2005) and self-confidence (e.g., Forbes & Fisher, 2018; Lam, 2006).

4 Developing the ability to interact in specific contexts

Oral performance is context-bound. Language knowledge (Long, 2015), speech act knowledge (Thornbury, 2005) and knowledge of interactional routines (Bygate, 1987) are context-specific. Aligning the contexts in which learners practice with the contexts in

which they are likely to engage in (future) interactional encounters is likely to optimize the effects of interactional instruction and practice (see Lightbown, 2008). The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) distinguishes four contexts in which language learners should be able to interact in the foreign language: the personal, public, occupational and educational context (Council of Europe, 2001). Within the context that is relevant for the current study, the pre-vocational track prepares learners for occupation-specific EFL interaction in their future careers, interactional practice should include the opportunity to develop their interactional ability in occupational contexts.

5 Previous research on EFL course books

In the last forty years, a large body of research into coursebook analysis has accumulated. Mukundan & Ahour (2010) provide an overview of evaluative checklists published during this time. In these, oral skills were typically included as part of a broader surface evaluation of all language skills and systems (e.g., Cunningsworth, 1995; Harmer, 1991; Littlejohn, 2011; Matthews, 1985; Mukundan et al., 2011; Ur, 2012; Williams, 1983). Little attention, however, was devoted to analyzing oral interaction specifically. More recently, Bueno-Alastuey & Luque Agulló (2015a) developed a checklist for the specific purpose of analysing oral competence in coursebooks, a small part of which is devoted to oral interaction. Subsequent analysis using this tool revealed that speaking practice in the five most-used coursebooks in the last year of Baccalaureate in Spain is mainly conducted in (semi)structured interaction activities, and that these activities are more form-focused that meaning-focused (Luque Agulló & Bueno-Alastuey, 2017).

Other coursebook evaluations have focused on distinct aspects of oral ability, e.g., pragmatics (e.g., Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Diepenbroek & Derwing, 2014; Gilmore, 2004; Vellenga, 2004; Wong, 2002), pronunciation (e.g., Burns & Hill, 2013; Derwing et al., 2013) and fluency practice (Diepenbroek & Derwing, 2014; Rossiter et al., 2010). Overall, these studies suggest a weak link between theory and practice. The language presented in coursebooks tends to bear little resemblance to real-life usage, and oral activities are typically aimed at practicing speaking (e.g., role plays), rather than at enhancing speaking ability (e.g., through pre-planning, task repetition or consciousness-raising activities). Similarly, interactional strategies known to be beneficial for handling real-time interaction are rarely modeled, introduced or practiced in coursebooks (Bueno-Alastuey & Luque Agulló, 2015b; Dörnyei and Thurrell,1994; Faucette, 2001).

This weak link between theory and practice has also been established in more general coursebook evaluation studies (Masuhara et al., 2008; Sheldon, 1988; Tomlinson, 2012, 2013). For instance, while the benefits of free language use in purposeful communication and interaction is widely recognized (e.g., Ellis, 2009; Long & Crookes, 2009), EFL materials seem to adopt a largely controlled, form-focused approach characterized by practice activities such as dialogue repetition and filling in blanks (e.g., Burns & Hill, 2013; Gómez-Rodríquez, 2010; Tomlinson, 2012). Criado and Sánchez (2009) report a 50–50% divide between communicative activities and activities aimed at form control in EFL course books targeting different educational levels and age groups in Spain. Tomlinson (2013), however, uncovers only few activities that focus on meaning-making, little opportunity for learners to use the language, and very few demands on learners to

speak or interact for a communicative purpose at any length in EFL course books for (young) adults at the intermediate level.

6 The present study

This study focuses on the analysis of commercially produced EFL materials used with learners who are in their third year of a four-year pre-vocational Business & Administration programme in the Netherlands, namely *Stepping stones* (André et al., 2012), *New interface* (Cornfold et al., 2010) and *All right!* (Houtenbos-Stupenea et al., 2014). These are all bi-lingual Dutch–English coursebooks. Up-to-date analyses of commonly used course books in the Netherlands are lacking (Kwakernaak, 2008). Foster and Hunter (2017) point out that teachers are not slavish followers of their course materials, and that experienced teachers in particular are very adept at tweaking, adapting and supplementing course materials to suit their needs (see Tavakoli & Hunter, 2017; Tomlinson, 2015). It has been observed, however, that language education in the Netherlands is largely dependent on the use of course materials (Educational Inspectorate, 2004). For this reason, it is important to establish whether these materials provide pre-vocational EFL learners with effective tools to develop their ability to interact in real-time, interactional situations that match the occupational context for which they are being prepared. We posed the following research question:

To what extent do oral interaction activities in commercially produced course materials in the Netherlands provide opportunities to (1) expand pre-vocational learners' EFL knowledge, (2) develop the ability to use this knowledge in real-time interaction, (3) develop interactional strategies and (4) practice interaction in occupational contexts?

To answer this question, a coding scheme was developed that operationalizes the requirements for developing interactional ability, i.e., attention paid to language knowledge, language use, interactional strategies and specific contexts (e.g., Celce-Murcia, 2007).

II Method

1 Course materials

Three course books from Dutch publishing houses were selected that were most used with third-year pre-vocational learners in 2013–14: *Stepping stones 3 vmbo-K* (4th edition), *New interface yellow / Orange label, 3 vmbo K* (2nd edition) and *All right! 3 vmbo-K* (2nd edition).[1] The main aim was to determine the type of learning behavior required of learners in each interaction activity (Littlejohn, 2011). Hence, the interaction activities of all chapters (six or seven per book) were taken as the unit of analysis.[2]

2 Coding scheme

Following Littlejohn (2011), a coding scheme was designed that allows for three levels of analysis: objective description, subjective analysis and subjective inference regarding the likely effect the material will have on its users (see Tomlinson, 2012). This resulted in three sections requiring increasingly more interpretation and analysis

(Appendix 1). Several elements from Bueno-Alastuey and Luque Agulló (2015a)'s tool for analysing oral competence were adopted and made specific to oral interaction, e.g., determining activity type, evaluating the pre-, during and post-stages, the level of directedness (from controlled to guided to free interaction), attentional focus and attention paid to strategies.

Section I collects objective descriptions of factual information pertaining to publication details, type of material (general English or ESP), targeted CEFR level, language of instruction and the number of interaction activities in relation to the total number of activities. It includes an overview of textbook and workbook organization (including reference material) and of the language functions that are central to each chapter.

Section II is an inventory of task type, task organization and interactional context. It only lists activities in which two or more speakers take turns to produce spoken English and distinguishes between simple learning activities focused solely on the practice of L2 oral interaction, and complex tasks in which learners interact in order to complete a task larger than interaction alone. To answer part (4) of the research question, this section furthermore surveys the contexts in which each interaction activity is situated, differentiating between the personal, public, occupational and educational context (Council of Europe, 2001).

Section III of the coding scheme operationalizes the requirements for developing (1) language knowledge, (2) language use and (3) interactional strategies by detailing the demands made on learners at four stages of learning: leading up to the interactional activity, before interaction, during interaction and after interaction.

The *lead-in* category charts whether learners are prepared for interaction by paying attention to both linguistic knowledge and interactional strategies, and by determining whether this takes place before or after engaging in interaction themselves (e.g., Long, 1996). It further surveys whether reference is made to interactional strategies that learners could use during performance, and whether dialogues are used as models. If so, the coding scheme details whether these model real-time speech, i.e., the use of language forms and interactional strategies.

The *pre-interaction* category surveys the type of pre-interaction activities that learners perform in order to free up attentional space (Foster & Skehan, 1996): language preparation, content preparation or interactional strategies preparation.

The *during-interaction* category establishes the extent to which the interactional activities provide learners with practice in purposeful real-time interaction. Time demands are charted by analyzing the type of language learners are asked to produce (prescribed or spontaneous). Reciprocity demands are charted by analyzing whether activities contain an information gap. The focus of learners' attentional resources during task performance (e.g., Diepenbroek & Derwing, 2014; Lightbown & Spada, 2013) is analysed by differentiating between a focus on achieving a communicative goal, using accurate language and interactional strategies. Finally, the coding scheme plots the extent to which learners are engaged in extended, challenging discourse that focuses primarily on meaning-making (e.g., Segalowitz & Lightbown, 1999).

The *post-interaction* category surveys the extent to which the gains of interaction are consolidated by outlining the focus of reflection and feedback activities (e.g., Ellis, 2009;

Kurtz, 2011), opportunities for additional instruction and practice (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 2013; Willis, 1996), and opportunities for task repetition (e.g., Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; Bygate, 1996, 2001; De Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Lynch & Maclean, 2001; Sample & Michel, 2015; Wang, 2014).

To promote a reliable use of the coding scheme, exhaustive and precisely-defined options were provided for each category, along with rating guidelines and descriptors of the categories covered in the scheme (e.g., Neuendorf, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003).

3 Procedure

The first author identified the interaction activities in each chapter and completed the factual information in sections I and II on each coding scheme. Then, three undergraduate students in their final year of an EFL teacher training programme aimed specifically at obtaining a teaching degree in (pre-)vocational education filled in Section III for the first chapter of each of the three course books. In the training session that followed, ratings and interpretations of each category were discussed. Some modifications with regards to formulation were made, e.g., for the category *attentional focus* the descriptor 'focus on communicating meaning' was reformulated to 'focus on achieving a communicative goal'. This resulted in final consolidation of the coding categories. Subsequently, raters independently rated chapters 2, 4 and 6 of each course book to establish inter-rater reliability, and each of the three raters independently rated the remaining chapters of one of the course books.

4 Rating

Intercoder reliability was determined using Krippendorff's α for multiple raters (Krippendorff, 2004), using the SPSS macro of Hayes and Krippendorff (2007) with bootstrapping (10,000) to estimate confidence intervals. Most of the coding categories showed severe skewness. Since this tends to result in low reliability coefficients despite relatively high levels of inter-coder agreement (see Artstein & Poesio, 2008), also percentage agreement among the three raters was calculated for the nominal data.

Ratings for *Language forms* (α = .928, 95%, *CI* .901–.954) and *Interactional strategies* (α = 1) modeled in the sample dialogues were ordinal. All other ratings were nominal. Substantial agreement between raters was found for *Preparation* (96.67%, α = .933, 95% *CI* .876–.978), *Spontaneity* (86.67%, α = .740, 95% *CI* .61–.849), *Information gap* (93.33%, α = .889, 95% *CI* .774–.975), *Reflection/feedback* (91.67%, α = .687, 95% *CI* .474–.887), *Task repetition* (98.33%, α = .954, 95% *CI* .834–1) and *Task-repeated information gap* (96.67%, α = .939, 95% *CI* .857–1). Although alpha values were lower for *Lead-in, Additional work, Discourse type* and *Attentional focus* due to severely skewed data, percentage of agreement was acceptable for these categories (95.00%, α = .235, 95% *CI* −.311, −.650; 96.67%, α = −.006, *CI* −1.00, −.397; 81.67%, α = .385, *CI* .044 to .698 and 71.67%, α = .134, *CI* −.109 to .356, respectively).

The variables were examined for accuracy of data entry and missing values, and were subsequently analysed for each course book separately.

Table 1. General information about the sample of course books (Section I).

	Stepping stones	New interface	All right!
Type of English	General	General	General
CEFR level	A2/B1	A2/B1	A2/B1
Language of instruction	Dutch	Dutch	Dutch
Number of chapters	7	7	6
Number of interaction activities	35 (10.9%)	50 (14.4%)	50 (15.0%)

Notes. CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Table 2. Inventory of interaction activities (Section II).

	Stepping stones	New interface	All right!
Activity type:			
Stand-alone activity	31 (88.6%)	48 (96%)	50 (100%)
Task	4 (11.4%)	2 (4%)	–
Organization:			
Pairwork	34 (97.1%)	49 (98%)	50 (100%)
Groupwork	1 (2.9%)	1 (2%)	–
Whole-class work	–	–	–
Context:			
Personal	30 (85.7%)	48 (96%)	18 (36%)
Public	3 (8.6%)	2 (4%)	32 (64%)
Occupational	2 (5.7%)	–	–
Educational	–	–	–

III Results

Table 1 contains factual information obtained from Section I of the coding scheme. Section I shows that all three books offer general EFL instruction aimed at CEFR level A2/B1 and use Dutch as the language of instruction. It also shows that ca. 10–15% of the curriculum is reserved for oral interaction practice.

Section I furthermore shows that language forms are introduced in relation to specific language functions in all three course books. *Stepping stones* contains a reference section for interactional strategies in the back of the book, and *All right!* includes a speaking tip in each unit (Appendix 1).

Frequencies in Section II (Table 2) indicate that this practice is largely organized as pair work and is predominantly situated in the personal and public context. The most frequently occurring activity type is the stand-alone interaction activity. Complex language tasks in which oral interaction is integrated are scarce.

Table 3 shows that *Stepping stones* does not make use of sample dialogues to introduce the interaction tasks. The other two books use dialogues in 22–28% of the cases. These dialogues mainly model language forms. On two occasions, *All right!* models some interactional strategies. *New interface* does not.

Table 3. Analysis of sample dialogues.

	Stepping stones	New interface	All right!
Number of dialogues	0 (0%)	14 (28%)	11 (22%)
Language forms:			
None	–	–	–
Some	–	11 (78.5%)	11 (100%)
Many	–	3 (21.4%)	–
Interactional strategies:			
None	–	14 (100%)	9 (81.8%)
Some	–	–	2 (4.0%)
Many	–	–	–

Section III (Table 4) shows that the lead-in activities are almost exclusively form-focused in all three course books. In the pre-interaction stage, learners mostly engage in language planning. During interaction, speech production is more prescribed than spontaneous except in *Stepping stones*, where 37.1% of learners' messages feature spontaneous speech and where speech is prescribed for one speaker and spontaneous for the other in 11.4% of the cases. *Stepping stones* also features a substantial amount of information gap activities. These are largely absent in the other two books. In all three books, learners' attention during interaction is mainly focused on accurate language use and interaction activities engage learners in limited rather than extended discourse.

After interaction, learners frequently switch roles with their partners and immediately repeat the same task. In these instances, an information gap is mostly absent. *Stepping stones* and *All right!* contain a small amount of reflection and/or feedback activities. In the former, the focus is on task completion and accurate language use. In the latter, the focus of reflection is not clear. None of the books offer additional instruction or practice following interaction.

IV Discussion

The main objective of this study was to establish to what extent interactional activities in commercially produced course materials in the Netherlands provide opportunities (1) to expand pre-vocational learners' EFL knowledge, (2) to develop their ability to use this knowledge in real-time interaction, (3) to develop interactional strategies and (4) to practice interaction in specific contexts. The results demonstrate that the interaction activities are focused on developing language knowledge, but rarely focus on learning how to use this knowledge in real-time interaction. The results furthermore show that interaction strategies instruction is largely absent. Interaction activities are set mainly in the personal and public context, but not in the occupational context.

All three course books adopt a form-focused approach to oral interaction. Language forms are introduced in relation to specific language functions, the application of which is practiced mostly in stand-alone activities rather than integrated in more complex tasks. If present, these tasks are placed at the end of the learning sequence. The sample

Table 4. Analysis of oral interaction activities (Section III).

			Stepping stones	New interface	All right!
Lead-in	focuses on	language	35 (100%)	43 (86%)	46 (92%)
		interaction strategies	–	–	–
		other	–	–	2 (4%)
		interaction precedes activities	–	7 (4%)	2 (4%)
Pre	preparation	language	16 (45.7%)	34 (68%)	42 (84%)
		content	9 (25.7%)	–	3 (6%)
		combination language/ content	5 (14.3%)	2 (4%)	–
		uneven between speakers	1 (2.9%)	–	–
		interaction strategies	–	–	–
		no preparation	4 (11.4%)	14 (28%)	3 (6%)
During	spontaneity	mainly prescribed	18 (51.4%)	49 (98%)	36 (72%)
		mainly spontaneous	13 (37.1%)		14 (28%)
		uneven between speakers	4 (11.4%)	1 (2%)	–
	information gap	yes	21 (60%)	–	11 (22%)
	attentional focus	accuracy	22 (62.9%)	46 (92%)	45 (90%)
		communicative goal	2 (5.7%)	–	5 (10%)
		strategies	–	–	–
		combination accuracy / communication	9 (25.7%)	3 (6%)	–
		unclear	2 (5.7%)	1 (2%)	
	discourse	limited	31 (88.6%)	48 (96%)	44 (88%)
		extended	4 (11.4%)	2 (4%)	6 (12%)
Post	reflection/ feedback	task completion	5 (14.2%)	–	–
		accuracy	3 (8.5%)	–	–
		communicative goal	1 (2.9%)	–	–
		interaction strategies	–	–	–
		focus unclear	–	–	11 (22%)
	additional work	language	–	–	–
		interaction strategies	–	–	–
		other	–	1 (2%)	–
	task repetition	immediate	13 (37.1%)	49 (98%)	50 (100%)
		delayed	–	–	–
		information gap	10 (76.9%)	2 (4.8%)	15 (30%)

dialogues and lead-in activities almost exclusively serve to help learners notice, practice and apply salient language forms prior to interaction, but typically do not model interactional strategies. The tendency in EFL course books to model accurate and problem-free discourse has previously been reported by Gilmore (2004).

The focus on form is maintained throughout each stage of the interaction activity. In the pre-interaction stage, learners engage in a considerable amount of language planning, but much less in content planning. Speech production during interaction is more prescribed than spontaneous. The advantage of language planning is that it frees up learners' attentional resources, which aids accurate and fluent performance (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996, 2013). A disadvantage is that language planning hinders practicing formulating messages under time pressure. *Stepping stones* offers a more balanced practice of prepared and unprepared speech than the other two books. It also features a substantial amount of information gap activities that potentially provide learners with the opportunity to practice interaction that is unpredictable, i.e., where they do not know what the other person is going to say. Despite the large number of information gap activities, however, ratings suggest that learners' attention during these interactions is mainly focused on accurate language use rather than on achieving a communicative outcome, just as in the other two books.

The role cards in *Stepping stones* explicate the setting and do not reveal what each speech partner is going to say or ask, but they do not always contain a clear communicative goal that can only be achieved through a genuine exchange of information given. At the same time, learners are instructed to use the sample phrases presented in the course book. This is likely to lead more to practicing the correct use of language than to practicing achieving a communicative goal.

Ratings furthermore suggest that all three course books engage learners in limited rather than extended discourse i.e., in discourse that is cognitively and/or linguistically unchallenging. Activities like the repetitive drill and acting out (previously completed) dialogues occur frequently in all three course books. The information gap activities in *Stepping stones*, however, are also frequently rated as limited. As mentioned above, these activities tend to lack a communicative goal and instruct learners to use sample phrases presented in the course book during task performance. This seems to decrease both the cognitive and linguistic challenge posed to learners. An overrepresentation of activities that require little cognitive and linguistic effort in EFL course books has previously been reported by Burns and Hill (2013), Gómez-Rodríquez (2010) and Tomlinson (2012, 2013). Their restricted nature prevents learners from practicing retrieving language knowledge under time-pressure, and prevent effects of planning time to occur (Foster & Hunter, 2017). Furthermore, the absence of an information gap and/or a communicative goal keeps learners from actual meaning-making while meeting real-life reciprocity demands. Lightbown (2008) and Segalowitz and Lightbown (1999) have argued that such restricted interactional practice does not develop the learners' ability to interact in real-time encounters effectively.

At the post-interaction stage, the three books offer limited reflection, feedback activities nor additional instruction and practice. The reflection activities present in *Stepping stones* focus on task completion (e.g., 'I asked my peer five questions') or on language accuracy (e.g., 'I used the words correctly'). *All right!* invites learners to reflect with an instruction like 'Read the dialogue on page 14. Act this out with a classmate. Switch roles. Do you find it difficult? Then listen to the dialogue again' (Workbook, p. 14); however, it does not become clear what learners might find difficult.

The most-used post-interaction activity is immediate task repetition. This means that learners are instructed to switch roles immediately after completing the interaction task, often without the guarantee of an information gap. Task repetition is generally considered to be helpful in freeing up attentional resources (e.g., Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; Bygate, 1996, 2001; De Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Lynch & Maclean, 2001; Sample & Michel, 2015; Thai & Boers, 2016; Wang, 2014). However, unlike the tasks used in these studies, the 'read-aloud' dialogues found in the coursebooks are largely mechanical and require little cognitive and linguistic effort. In a sense, these dialogues are not 'tasks' as defined in the paradigm of task-based language teaching, but are perhaps more aptly labeled 'exercises' (see Ellis, 2009). Furthermore, the repeated interaction requires learners to take on a different role. While learners may be able to recycle the language they heard their peers use and so learn from each other, they are not given the opportunity to repeat the original performance. Instead, they engage in a different performance that requires different language to be processed. Taking these points into consideration, it is uncertain how valuable the immediate repetition found in coursebooks is for the development of learners' interactional ability.

Interactional strategies do not typically feature in the course books. *Stepping stones* includes an overview of useful interaction strategies, but learners are not referred to these in the materials. *All right!* models the meaning negotiation strategy ('Could you repeat that please?' 'Could you speak more slowly, please?') in chapter 2, but this strategy is not practiced, applied or reflected on in the interaction sequence. *All right!* also includes speaking tips, but these do not cover interactional strategies as such and practice of these remains implicit in the material. The overall absence of interactional strategies instruction and practice is in line with Bueno-Alastuey and Luque Agulló's (2015b), Dörnyei and Thurrell's (1994) and Faucette's (2001) findings that interactional strategies aimed at helping learners handle real-time interaction are rarely modeled, introduced or practiced in EFL course materials.

Finally, the contexts in which interactional activities are situated are largely limited to the personal (*Stepping stones* and *New interface*) and public (*All right!*) context. Although this choice seems appropriate for the age group in question, the absence of interactional practice in the occupational context is remarkable in light of the pre-vocational track for which these course books are used. Since interactional ability developed in one context does not guarantee the same ability in other contexts (e.g., Lightbown, 2008), this may leave learners underprepared for occupation-specific EFL oral interaction in further vocational education.

In all, the results of this study show that interaction practice offered in course books focuses on developing language knowledge, but not as much on using this knowledge in interactional settings that simulate real-life processing and reciprocity constraints. Results furthermore show that interactional practice does not include the development of interactional strategies and is limited to the personal and public context. This raises the question whether these curricula provide pre-vocational learners with sufficient opportunity to develop their interactional abilities.

1 Limitations and suggestions for future research

The three course books selected for this study are the most commonly used with pre-vocational learners in the Netherlands and are therefore considered to be representative of pre-vocational curricula in this country. Further research is needed to gain insight into

the treatment of oral interaction activities in curricula designed for different educational tracks, age groups and languages, both in- and outside of the Netherlands.

The coding scheme designed for this study is the first to focus specifically on the analysis of oral interaction activities. The substantial agreement found between three independent raters provides a first indication that the coding scheme can usefully be employed to analyse oral interaction activities in (E)FL course books, but wider application in a variety of educational contexts is needed to further validate this tool.

2 Implications for practice

At present, weak links exist between theories of second language acquisition (SLA) focused on developing interactional ability and the practical application of these in EFL course books used with pre-vocational learners in the Netherlands. Strengthening this link could increase the opportunities for developing EFL interactional abilities currently offered to pre-vocational learners. As suggested by Foster and Hunter (2017) and Tomlinson (2015), EFL teachers could furthermore optimize the way in which they work with mandatory course materials. This way, oral interaction may not only be practiced, but also enhanced. Some suggestions for coursebooks and teachers are discussed below.

a Developing language knowledge. As seen, the course books place heavy emphasis on developing learners' language knowledge and, in line with the overall aims of Communicative Language Teaching, present grammatical and lexical language forms in relation to the communicative functions they serve to fulfill. To develop language knowledge specifically for interactional purposes, language practice should be integrated in meaningful language use (see Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p.117). To further enhance the development of language knowledge specifically for interactional purposes, controlled activities (e.g., drills and gap-fills) could be supplemented with practice activities that focus on achieving a communicative goal. Furthermore, since reflection and feedback positively affect the development of language knowledge (see Lyster & Saito, 2010), reflection and feedback activities could be included more systematically than is currently the case, for instance by teachers expanding on language forms used by learners during interaction (Kurtz, 2011). These activities should focus not on accurate language use, but also on the extent to which learners are able to achieve the communicative goal using these language forms.

b Developing language use. Learners' ability to use their language knowledge could be improved by engaging them more in challenging discourse that serves a clear communicative purpose beyond interacting alone, and that is concerned with a genuine exchange of meaning between speech partners while taking account of time constraints and reciprocity in interaction. This could be achieved by including more information gap tasks where there is an actual need to interact with each other in order to exchange the information necessary to achieve a communicative goal, e.g., solving a problem or reaching agreement (e.g., Skehan, 1998; Willis, 1996).

Furthermore, more extended and challenging discourse could be evoked by complementing interactional practice in isolated interaction activities with practice in more complex tasks, where learners draw on a range of language skills to achieve a larger

communicative goal (e.g., interviewing classmates in order to obtain the information needed to write a brochure).

Learners should be prepared for interacting under time-pressure. To address the fact that that learners' attentional resources will be thinly stretched when doing so, language planning could be balanced with content planning, or language and content planning could be alternated. Similarly, planned (i.e., prepared) interaction tasks could be complemented with unplanned (i.e., spontaneous) interaction tasks, or by combining planned interaction sequences with unplanned sequences (see Kurtz, 2011, 2015). Real-life interaction could furthermore be simulated by placing the interaction task at the beginning of a learning sequence rather than at the end of it. To alleviate the attentional challenge that such a task-first approach poses, delayed task repetition could be promoted. Here, learners reflect on task performance and receive additional input prior to repeating the task, possibly in an adapted version or with a different peer (e.g., Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005). During the repeated performance, attentional space is freed up to pay attention more accurate, contextually appropriate, complex or fluent delivery of the message (e.g., Bygate, 2001; De Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Lynch & Maclean, 2001; Kurtz, 2011).

c Developing interactional strategies. To provide learners with more opportunities to develop their interactional abilities, strategies instruction and practice could be provided. A survey like the one included in *Stepping stones* provides learners with a useful tool, especially if it is referred to in the preparation stage of the interaction activity. Awareness of strategies could furthermore be raised by studying models of interaction in which strategies are employed (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995; Rossiter, 2003; Sayer, 2005) and by reflecting and obtaining feedback on their own use of strategies during task performance (e.g., Bejarano et al., 1997; Nakatani, 2005; Yule & Powers, 1994). Additionally, course books could include direct instruction (e.g., Lam, 2004; Nakatani, 2005) and conscious practice of strategies (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995; Rossiter, 2003).

d Developing the ability to interact in specific contexts. Because oral performance is context-bound, course books should align the contexts in which learners practice with the contexts in which they will engage in (future) interactional encounters. In this light, course books used with pre-vocational learners could complement the activities situated in the personal and public context with interactional activities that are situated in the learners' future occupational contexts.

V Conclusions

Strong oral interaction skills are indispensable for pre-vocational learners, who will need to interact with non-Dutch speakers as part of their job. It is thus of vital importance that these learners gain maximum benefit from the 10–15% of activities presently reserved for oral interaction in course books. Using a theory-based coding scheme to analyse these course books has made apparent the hiatuses that exist in the practice opportunities offered to pre-vocational learners, showing concretely which aspects of oral interaction are missing from current interactional practice. This may give curriculum developers and practitioners direction in their discussions about potential future developments in the EFL curriculum.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the anonymous reviewers and editors of Language Teaching Research for their insightful comments and suggestions on the earlier drafts of this paper.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Notes

1. Recently, new editions have been published for *Stepping Stones* and *New Interface*. These editions have not been taken into consideration for this analysis, because we wished to analyse the materials that learners participating in a larger research project concerning EFL oral interaction instruction worked with. This project ran from 2013 to 2016.
2. Teacher guides for *Stepping stones* and *New interface* were available. These did not add substantial information about the interaction activities and were therefore not included as a unit of analysis.

References

Ahmad, S., & Rao, C. (2012). Does it work? Implementing communicative language teaching approach in EFL context. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *3*, 28–35.

Ahmadian, M.J., & Tavakoli, M. (2011). The effects of simultaneous use of careful online planning and task repetition on accuracy, complexity, and fluency in EFL learners' oral production. *Language Teaching Research*, *15*, 35–59.

André C., Van Diemen A., Falińska S., et al. (2012). *Stepping Stones 3, vmbo-k*. 4th edition. Groningen: Noordhoff Uitgevers.

Artstein, R., & Poesio, M. (2008). Inter-coder agreement for computational linguistics. *Computational Linguistics*, *34*, 555–596.

Bejarano, Y., Levine, T., Olshtain, E., & Steiner, J. (1997). The skilled use of interaction strategies: Creating a framework for improved small-group communicative interaction in the language classroom. *System*, *25*, 203–214.

Bonnet, G. (2002). *The assessment of pupils' skills in English in eight European countries: A European project*. European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems.

Boxer, D., & Pickering, L. (1995). Problems in the presentation of speech acts in ELT materials: The case of complaints. *ELT Journal*, *49*, 44–58.

Bueno-Alastuey, M.C., & Luque Agulló, G.L. (2015a). A tool to analyze oral competence development in EFL textbooks. *Revista Española de Lingüística Aplicada / Spanish Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *28*, 73–96.

Bueno-Alastuey, M.C., & Luque Agulló, G.L. (2015b). Explicit instruction and implicit use of L2 learning strategies in higher secondary EFL coursebooks. *International Journal of English Studies*, *15*, 17–39.

Burns, A., & Hill, D. (2013). Teaching speaking in a second language. In Tomlinson, B. (Ed.), *Applied linguistics and materials development* (pp. 231–248). New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bygate, M. (1996). Effects of task repetition: Appraising the developing language of learners. In Willis, J. & Willis, D. (Eds.), *Challenge and change in language teaching* (pp. 136–146). Australia: MacMillan Education.

Bygate, M. (2001). Effects of task repetition on the structure and control of oral language. In Bygate, M., Skehan, P., & M. Swain (Eds.), *Researching pedagogic tasks: Second language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 23–48). Harlow: Pearson Education.

Byram, M., Holmes, P., & Savvides, N. (2013). Intercultural communicative competence in foreign language education: Questions of theory, practice and research. *The Language Learning Journal*, *41*, 251–253.

Canale, M. (1983). On some dimensions of language proficiency. In Oller, J.W. (Ed.), *Issues in language testing research* (pp. 333–342). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2007). Rethinking the role of communicative competence in language teaching. In Soler, E.A., & P.S. Jorda (Eds.), *Intercultural language use and language learning* (pp. 41–57). Dordrecht: Springer.

Chen, Z., & Goh, C. (2011). Teaching oral English in higher education: Challenges to EFL teachers. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *16*, 333–345.

College voor Toetsen en Examens. (2017). *Examenprogramma Engelse taal vmbo vanaf CE 2017* [Exam programme English language in pre-vocational education from 2017 onwards]. Utrecht: College voor Toetsen en Examens. Available at: https://www.examenblad.nl/examenstof/engels-vmbo-2/2017/vmbo-tl/f=/Examenprogramma_Engelse_taal_vanaf_CE_2017_def.pdf (accessed September 2018).

Cornfold, A., Van der Kooi, H., Oosterlee, A., et al. (2010). *New Interface yellow label, 3 vmbo (k) gt*. 2nd edition. Utrecht: ThiemeMeulenhoff.

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching and assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Criado, R., & Sánchez, A. (2009). English language teaching in Spain: Do textbooks comply with the official methodological regulations? A sample analysis. *International Journal of English Studies*, *9*, 1–28.

Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Oxford: MacMillan Heinemann.

De Bot, K. (1992). A bilingual production model: Levelt's speaking model adapted. *Applied Linguistics*, *13*, 1–25.

De Jong, N., & Perfetti, C.A. (2011). Fluency training in the ESL classroom: An experimental study of fluency development and proceduralization. *Language Learning*, *61*, 533–568.

Derwing, T.M., Diepenbroek, L.G., & Foote, J.A. (2013). How well do general-skills ESL textbooks address pronunciation? *TESL Canada Journal*, *30*, 22–44.

Diepenbroek, L.G., & Derwing, T.M. (2014). To what extent do popular ESL textbooks incorporate oral fluency and pragmatic development? *TESL Canada Journal*, *30*, 1–20.

Dörnyei, Z. (1995). On the teachability of communication strategies. *TESOL Quarterly*, *29*, 55–85.

Dörnyei, Z., & Kormos, J. (1998). Problem-solving mechanisms in L2 communication. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *20*, 349–385.

Dörnyei, Z., & Scott, M. (1995). Communication strategies: An empirical analysis with retrospection. In Turley, J.S., & K. Lusby (Eds.), *Selected papers from the proceedings of the 21st Annual Symposium of the Deseret Language and Linguistics Society* (pp. 155–168). Provo: Brighham Young University.

Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1994). Teaching conversational skills intensively: Course content and rationale. *ELT Journal*, *48*, 40–49.

Educational Inspectorate. (2004). *Werk aan de basis: Evaluatie van de basisvorming na vijf jaar* [Building the foundation: Evaluation of the foundation curriculum after five years]. De Meern: Inspectie van het onderwijs.

Ellis, G. (1996). How culturally appropriate is the communicative approach? *ELT Journal*, *50*, 213–218.

Ellis, R. (2009). Task-based research and language pedagogy. In: Van de Branden, K., Bygate, M., & J. Norris (Eds.), *Task-based language teaching: A reader* (pp. 109–129). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Fasoglio, D. (2015). *Doelstellingen en toetsing gespreksvaardigheid Engels, Duits en Frans* [Attainment targets and assessment oral interaction English, German and French]. Enschede: Stichting Leerplanontwikkeling.

Faucette, P. (2001). A pedagogical perspective on communication strategies: Benefits of training and an analysis of English language teaching materials. *Second Language Studies*, *19*, 1–40.

Forbes, K., & Fisher, L. (2018). The impact of expanding advanced level secondary school students' awareness and use of metacognitive learning strategies on confidence and proficiency in foreign language speaking skills. *The Language Learning Journal*, *46*, 173–185.

Foster, P., & Hunter, A. (2017). When it's not what you do, but the way that you do it: How research into second language acquisition can help teachers to make the most of their classroom materials. In Tomlinson, B. (Ed.), *SLA research and materials development for language learning* (pp. 280–293). New York: Routledge.

Foster, P., & Skehan, P. (1996). The influence of planning on performance in task-based learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *18*, 299–324.

Foster, P., & Skehan, P. (2013). The effects of post-task activities on the accuracy of language during task performance. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *69*, 249–273.

Gatbonton, E., & Segalowitz, N. (2005) Rethinking communicative language teaching: A focus on access to fluency. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *61*, 325–353.

Gilmore, A. (2004). A comparison of textbook and authentic interactions. *ELT Journal*, *58*, 363–374.

Gómez-Rodríguez, L.F. (2010). English textbooks for teaching and learning English as a foreign language: Do they really help to develop communicative competence? *Educación y Educadores*, *13*, 327–346.

Harmer, J. (1991). *The practice of English language teaching*. Harlow: Longman.

Hayes, A., & Krippendorff, K. (2007). Answering the call for a standard reliability measure for coding data. *Communication Methods and Measures*, *1*, 77–89.

Housen, A., Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2012). *Dimensions of L2 performance and proficiency: Complexity, accuracy and fluency in SLA: Volume 32*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Houtenbos-Stupenea, V., Hemstra, L., & Vos, B. (2014). *All Right! Engels voor de bovenbouw 3 vmbo-k* [All right! English for year 3 of the advanced vocational track]. 2nd edition. 's-Hertogenbosch: Malmberg.

Jansma, N., & Pennewaard, L. (2014). *Aansluiting Engels tussen vmbo-tl en mbo: Ervaringen vanuit de onderwijspraktijk* [Aligning English in pre-vocational and vocational education: Experiences from the field]. Enschede: Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling.

Kormos, J. (2006). *Speech production and second language acquisition*. London: Routledge.

Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kurtz, J. (2011). Breaking through the communicative cocoon: Improvisation in secondary school foreign language classrooms. In Sawyer, R.K. (Ed.), *Structure and improvisation in creative teaching* (pp. 133–161). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Kurtz, J. (2015). Fostering and building upon oral creativity in the EFL classroom. In Maley, A., & N. Peachy (Eds.), *Creativity in the English language classroom* (pp. 73–83). London: British Council.

Kwakernaak, E. (2008). Een goede mix [A good mix]. *Levende Talen Magazine*, *95*, 9–12.

Kwakernaak, E. (2016). Tussen blokkendoos en taalbad: Waarheen met ons vreemdetalenonderwijs? [Between building bricks and language bath: Where to with our modern foreign language education?] Part I. *Levende Talen Magazine*, *103*, 10–14.

Lam, W.Y.K. (2004). *Teaching strategy use for oral communication tasks to ESL learners*. Leeds: University of Leeds.

Lam, W.Y.K. (2006). Gauging the effects of ESL oral communication strategy teaching: A multi-method approach. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, *3*, 142–157.

Levelt, W.J.M. (1989). *Speaking: From intention to articulation*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Liemberg, E., & Van Kleunen, E. (1998). *Talen in actie: Eindrapport van een onderzoek naar de rol van de moderne vreemde talen in de BVE-sector* [Languages in action: Final report on research into the role of modern foreign languages in vocational and adult education]. Den Bosch: CINOP/SLO.

Lightbown, P.M. (2008). Transfer appropriate processing as a model for classroom second language acquisition. In Han, Z. (Ed.), *Understanding second language process* (pp. 27–44). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Lightbown, P.M., & Spada, N. (1990). Focus-on-form and corrective feedback in communicative language teaching. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *12*, 429–448.

Lightbown, P.M., & Spada, N. (2013) *How languages are learned*. 4th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Littlejohn, A. (2011). The analysis of language teaching materials: Inside the Trojan Horse. In Tomlinson, B. (Ed.), *Materials development in language teaching* (pp. 179–211). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Long, M. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In: Ritchie, W., & T. Bhatia (Eds.) *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413–468). New York: Academic Press.

Long, M. (2015). *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Long, M., & Crookes, G. (2009). Three approaches to task-based syllabus design. In Van de Branden, K., Bygate, M., & J. Norris (Eds.), *Task-based language teaching: A reader* (pp. 57–81). Philadelphia, PA/Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Luque Agulló, G.L., & Bueno-Alastuey, M.C. (2017). Analysis of oral skills development in the most used English language textbooks in the second year of Baccalaureate in Spain. *Porta Linguarum: Revista Internacional de Didáctica de las Lenguas Extranjeras*, *27*, 107–121.

Lynch, T., & Maclean, J. (2001). A case of exercising: Effects of immediate task repetition on learners' performance. In Bygate, M., Skehan, P., & M. Swain (Eds.), *Researching pedagogic tasks: Second language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 141–162). Harlow: Pearson Education.

Lyster, R., & Saito, K. (2010). Oral feedback in classroom SLA: A meta-analysis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *32*, 265–302.

Masuhara, H.M., Haan, Y., & Tomlinson, B. (2008). Adult EFL courses. *ELT Journal*, *62*, 294–312.

Matthews, A. (1985). Choosing the best available textbook. In Matthews, A., Spratt, M., & L. Dangerfield (Eds.), *At the chalkface* (pp. 202–206). London: Edward Arnold.

Mukundan, J., & Ahour, T. (2010). A review of textbook evaluation checklists across four decades (1970–2008). In Tomlinson, B., & H. Masuhara (Eds.), *Research for materials development in language learning: Evidence for best practice* (pp. 336–352). London: Bloomsbury.

Mukundan, J., Nimehchisalem, V., & Hajimohammadi, R. (2011). Developing an English language textbook evaluation checklist: A focus group study. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *1*, 100–106.

Nakatani, Y. (2005). The effects of awareness-raising training on oral communication strategy use. *The Modern Language Journal*, *89*, 76–91.

Neuendorf, K.A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ortega, L. (2007). Meaningful L2 practice in foreign language classrooms: A cognitive-interactionist SLA perspective. In DeKeyser, R.M. (Ed.), *Practice in a second language: Perspectives*

from applied linguistics and cognitive psychology (pp.180–207). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Perone, A. (2011). Improvising with adult English language learners. In Sawyer, R.K. (Ed.), *Structure and improvisation in creative teaching* (pp. 162–183). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J.C., & Rodgers, T.S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching: A description and analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rossiter, M.J. (2003). 'It's like chicken but bigger': Effects of communication strategy in the ESL classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *60*, 105–121.

Rossiter, M.J., Derwing, T.M., Manimtim, L.G., & Thomson, R.I. (2010). Oral fluency: The neglected component in the communicative language classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *66*, 583–606.

Sample, E., & Michel, M. (2015). An exploratory study into trade-off effects of complexity, accuracy, and fluency on young learners' oral task repetition. *TESL Canada Journal*, *31*, 23–46.

Sawyer, R.K. (2004). Creative teaching: Collaborative discussion as disciplined improvisation. *Educational Researcher*, *33*, 12–20.

Sawyer, R.K. (2011). What makes good teachers great? The artful balance of structure and improvisation. In Sawyer, R.K. (Ed.), *Structure and improvisation in creative teaching* (pp. 1–24). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sayer, P. (2005). An intensive approach to building conversational skills. *ELT Journal*, *59*, 14–22.

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, *11*, 127–158.

Segalowitz, N., & Lightbown, P.M. (1999). Psycholinguistic approaches to SLA. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *19*, 43–63.

Sheldon, L.E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, *42*, 237–246.

Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In Gass, S.M., & C.G. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235–252). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Tavakoli, P., & Hunter, A.M. (2017). Is fluency being 'neglected' in the classroom? Teacher understanding of fluency and related classroom practices. *Language Teaching Research*, *22*, 330–349.

Thai, C., & Boers, F. (2016). Repeating a monologue under increasing time pressure: Effects on fluency, complexity, and accuracy. *TESOL Quarterly*, *50*, 369–393.

Thornbury, S. (2005). *How to teach speaking*. Harlow: Pearson Education / Longman.

Tomlinson, B. (2003). *Materials evaluation*. In Tomlinson, B. (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 15–36). London: Continuum.

Tomlinson, B. (2012). Materials development for language learning and teaching. *Language Teaching*, *45*, 143–179.

Tomlinson, B. (2013). Second language acquisition and materials development. In Tomlinson, B. (Ed.), *Applied linguistics and materials development* (pp. 11–29). London: Bloomsbury.

Tomlinson, B. (2015). Challenging teachers to use their coursebook creatively. In Maley, A. & Peachy, N. (Eds.), *Creativity in the English language classroom* (pp. 24–28). London: British Council.

Ur, P. (2012). *A course in language teaching* (pp. 200–202). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vellenga, H. (2004). Learning pragmatics from ESL and EFL textbooks: How likely? *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, *8*.

Wang, Z. (2014). On-line time pressure manipulations: L2 speaking performance under five types of planning and repetition conditions. In Skehan, P. (Ed.), *Processing perspectives on task performance* (pp. 27–61). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
Willis, J. (1996). *A framework for task-based learning*. Harlow: Longman.
Wong, J. (2002). 'Applying' conversation analysis in applied linguistics: Evaluating dialogue in English as a second language textbooks. *IRAL*, *40*, 37–60.
Young, R.F. (2011). Interactional competence in language learning, teaching, and testing. In Hinkel, E. (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning: Volume 2* (pp. 426–443). London: Routledge.
Yule, G., & Powers, M. (1994). Investigating the communicative outcomes of task-based interaction. *System*, *22*, 81–91.

Appendix 1

(a) Interaction strategies presented in *Stepping stones*.

(b) Speaking tips presented in *All right!*

Having a conversation
- Make sure that you begin and end the conversation properly (greet and say goodbye)
- Try to keep talking, even if you don't know exactly how you should say something.

If you don't understand the other person, you can:
- Say that you don't understand (I'm sorry but I don't understand / Could you say that again? I don't know what that means)
- Ask for an explanation (what does that mean? /What does it look like? /Can you describe it? /Can you give an example?)

If you don't know a word, you can:
- Explain what something looks like (It looks like a mouse but bigger: rat)
- Explain what you can use the object for (you can put tea or coffee in it to keep it hot: thermos).

---

1. The manner in which you say something helps the other person to understand you better. For example, if you are happy to receive an invitation, the other should be able to notice this by your tone and facial expression.
2. Always speak calmly and clearly. This helps the other person understand you.
3. The interaction runs more smoothly if you repeat the other person's words. For example, if someone asks you 'What time does the next bus leave?', you start with 'The next bus leaves …'
4. Don't make things difficult for yourself. Mainly use short sentences and words you know. This way, you feel more secure when you are speaking.
5. Let the other person finish before you speak, otherwise you come across as rude.
6. Listen to each other's pronunciation. Do you hear a mistake? Correct each other, because you will learn from that.
