Chapter 1

Introduction: The Influence of Second Language Teachers' Conceptions and the Role of Interactions in Language Learning

1.1 Introduction

The way that second languages[1] are taught today has been influenced by theories of language learning and research that focus heavily on the language student (Anderson, Greeno, Reder, and Simon, 2000; Detaramani & Chan, 1996; Geddes & Stutridge, 1997). Language teachers, however (like other teachers), also embody values, attitudes, and ways of being and thinking that influence what goes on in the classroom. So questions naturally arise about how these ways of being and thinking influence the students. In other subject areas, *teacher perceptions*[2] of their teaching roles, along with their *beliefs* regarding teaching and learning, are considered particularly powerful and have been found to have a strong impact on student success (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999b).

Studies in mathematics and sciences have shown that teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching are consciously altered in relation to subject area and their perception of student ability (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Trigwell, Prosser, & Waterhouse, 1999). Therefore, we cannot expect to generalize from what has been learned about teachers' conceptions of teaching a subject at one level of ability (e.g., novice language learners) to apply to the same subject taught to learners at vastly

[1] In this thesis I use a broad definition of "second language learning" proposed by others, which includes the learning of any language to any level, if the learning of the second language takes place after the first language has been acquired (Mitchell & Myles, 2001)

[2] Although some researchers may prefer different definitions, in this paper the term "perception" refers to a single meaning or idea that may be based only on intuition, feeling, or a brief experience. The terms "conception" or "belief," however, are used simultaneously and refer to a more developed idea or an opinion that is the result of experience or a process of reflection and is thought to be true.

different levels of ability. Nor is it possible to simply transfer information on teacher perceptions and beliefs gathered in one subject area and assume it to be relevant to another.

The subject of language is distinct in many ways from the teaching and learning of other subjects, owing to its social and communicative nature (Allwright, 1979; Saville-Troike, 1982). The teaching and learning of a second language, in particular, involves developing cultural knowledge and understanding of the target language community,[3] which differentiates it from other subject areas (Chen, Stevenson, Hayward, & Burgess, 1995; Hudson-Hickling, 1997; Jiang, 2000; Kubota, 1999). These "sociolinguistic" properties of second language (L2) teaching and learning suggest that the relations between teachers' conceptions and their teaching approaches, along with the influence this has on students, will also be unique and should be investigated as a subject on its own.

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.
—Henry Brooks Adams (1838-1919, American man of letters)

According to Adams' quote, a teacher's influence reaches beyond the content of a particular lesson; this has also been reported empirically (Knowles, 1999; Heyneman & Todoric-Bebic, 2000). Research in other areas such as mathematics and science report that teachers' beliefs of learning and teaching a subject influences how they approach the teaching of a subject (Berg, 2002; Driver, Asoko, Leach, Mortimer, & Scott, 1994; Handal, Bobis, & Grimison, 2001). Some studies strongly indicate a connection between these beliefs and teaching practices and how students approach

[3] In the case of international languages such as English and Spanish that can be situated within a complex system of communities within the context of multi-cultural societies, the definition of "target community" presents its own set of problems.

learning that subject (Altrichter, Posch, & Somekh, 1993; Prosser, Trigwell, & Taylor, 1994). Teachers' influences are particularly important when we consider the numerous qualitative and quantitative studies that have reported an association between students' approaches to learning and their language learning outcomes (Freeman & Richards, 1993; Nunan, 1996; Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Williams, 1999). Yet, much of the past research on teachers in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom has focused on what they do in the classroom (teaching methodologies) rather than investigating the conceptions behind particular teaching approaches.

This lack of inquiry into the relations between teachers' beliefs and actual teaching practices in the area of second language teaching seems to suggest a dualistic view. Unlike the prominence and effort that has gone into understanding the relations between ESL learners' conceptions and their approaches to learning, ESL teachers' conceptions are somehow regarded as separate from the teaching approaches they adopt. Much more consideration is given to the influence of teacher training on teaching practices, with calls of more or improved training frequently reported (R. Brown, 2000; Jochums & Rodriguez, 1994; Reichelt, 2000). Yet, investigations into teaching practices report that teaching methodologies and theoretical perspectives taught in teacher-training programs appear to have little influence over what actually occurs in the classroom (Archer, 2000; Freeman & Richards, 1993; Zahorik, 1986).

Still, the influence of language teachers in the language classroom and on the language learning process is implicitly and continually emphasized in course evaluations where learners are frequently asked to evaluate their teachers' skills and continually report that their teachers' input is an important factor in their learning (Schellekens, 2003). The beliefs that underpin these skills and practices are still largely a mystery. It is my belief that if the purpose of research into language development is to

improve teaching and learning, then we need to shift the focus from merely evaluating current teaching practices to understanding the thinking behind these practices. In particular we need to try to understand the relations between these teachers' conceptions, what is taught in the classroom, and what second language students learn (K. Patrick, 2000). The only way to uncover these conceptions and develop an understanding of how these conceptions relate to practice is to go to what Ginott (below) terms the "decisive" element and ask the teachers themselves.

> **I've come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. My personal approach creates the climate. My daily mood makes the weather. As a teacher, I have a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.**
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> —Dr. Haim G. Ginott (1922-1973)

In this thesis, I will be reporting findings from an investigation that explores the relations between teachers' beliefs and reported practice through what could be termed a key element of second language development: *out-of-class interactions*.[4]

1.2 Background

1.2.1 STLM Project

The questions I propose to investigate began to form during a study I conducted in 1998 as a Master's in Education student, called the "Self Time Learning Modification" (STLM) project. This study focused on problems with outside

[4] The term "out-of-class interactions" in this proposal specifically refers to spoken interaction in the target language with speakers of the target language.

interactions from the learners' perspective. The focus came about naturally from students' complaints that they were unhappy with the interactions they were having with Australian English speakers outside the classroom, and expressions that this was impacting their progress in SLA. Therefore, the study was directly based on learners' needs, thus according with current pedagogical beliefs that successful language teaching methodologies should be centred on student needs (Nunan, 1988).

The students were adults attending courses at a private ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) centre who had reached a level of "upper-intermediate" to "advanced" proficiency in English. In other words, they had the language knowledge and skills to communicate[5] in a manner that could be understood by speakers of the target language outside the classroom. Therefore, these interactional problems could not be attributed solely to teaching methodologies or lack of ability. The aim of the study was to look at ways in which the students could improve their English language learning through effecting changes in their out-of-class interactions.

Over the course of the project, the students closely observed their own interactional experiences and described their conceptions of how these interactions related to their language acquisition both individually (taped and written journals) and with others (focused discussions with other participants). In addition, they reflected on the perceptions (held individually and represented in the group) of factors viewed as barriers to language learning. They then developed goals and learning strategies to overcome specific interactional problems they had identified. The project itself could be viewed as successful owing to both the group reports and individual assessments provided at the end of the project by the students. An additional, unexpected outcome

of the investigation was that the classroom teachers, of their own accord, were also reporting significant changes and improvements in individual students' second language development within the classroom context. The students' classroom teachers or in-class interactions had not been explicitly considered in the STLM study. Yet the different ways these students' had focused on improving their outside social interactions appeared to have impacted how these students had interacted in classroom contexts as well. Differences in how students' interacted or improvements in their formal classroom learning were noticed by a number of these students' teachers who approached me voluntarily and informally to ask why so and so's listening or speaking had improved so quickly, or what it was that students were doing in self-access because—"Student X or student Y is really doing well in my class; their proficiency has notably improved."

Initially, I attributed this success to changes or modifications in the students' learning approaches as a consequence of self reflection and co-operative learning, which were observed through the students working together in groups and pairs discussing their weekly out-of-class interactions in self-access as well as individually outside of class (for an overview see Bunts-Anderson, 2000a). The steps the students went through in developing their learning processes were closely analysed. The similarities these learning processes had with current research on the development of learners' self-regulatory skills were given particular attention (see Bunts-Anderson, 2000a).

[5] The term "communicate" within this thesis refers to the transfer of meaning or concepts through speaking in the target language rather than through the use of written texts or non-verbal communication techniques.

1.2.2 Current Investigation

In planning the current thesis the next step in the research process appeared to be further investigations that considered the current opportunities students had to work on these spoken interactions in their language development. The self-study time allocated by language institutions nationally and internationally, and the growing body of research on self-access centres (for examples see Chun, 1997; D. Gardner, 1993; Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Martyn, 1993) clearly indicated that this would be an appropriate context in which to situate the research. This focus was particularly viable in the Australian context, as many institutions have allocated 5 out of 25 hours of tuition time to self-study (frequently termed "self-access") in response to NEAS (National English Accreditation Scheme) accreditation requirements (Bowyer, 1995; Thurlow, 1995).

However, it was through the continued process of analysing findings[6] from this initial study, and reflecting on remarks received from administrators and academics in the area, that I began to closely consider the relations between the teachers' involvement in such learning processes, and outcomes. When I had presented the results of the STLM study I received comments from peers such as, "You are a very good teacher; I wish I had time to do that"—or, "That seems like a productive focus for students' self-study time; could I have a copy of your materials?" Focusing on students' language learning strategies had seemed like a natural and logical focus for a self-study situation—was a teacher's involvement with language development outside of class really that unusual? If focusing on out-of-class interactions seemed unusual for a self-access situation, how would it be perceived within the classroom context? If these interactions were approached in the classroom, how were they approached? Did the

teachers initiate a focus on these interactions or did the students, as had been the case in the STLM study? Did teachers' beliefs regarding these interactions somehow influence how they were approached in the classroom?

There is ample evidence in the literature that approaches to learning which focuses on "real life" social interactions are considered to be not only beneficial to the language learner but an integral part of the developmental process. Krashen, well known for his $(i+1)$[7] hypothesis, describes the teachers' role as providing comprehensible input and helping students to obtain input outside the classroom: "Our goal, I think, is to bring students to the point where they can improve on their own from the informal environment" (Krashen, 1981, p. 106). Yet, there is very little information on how current teaching practices address these out-of-class interactions. In fact it could be argued that such teaching practices are perceived as rare rather than the standard, as evidenced in the excerpt below (taken from notes of an interview I conducted with the Director of Studies (DOS) at a NSW ELICOS centre).

> The DOS stated that although she viewed working on problems with outside interactions to be an appropriate use of self-access, she felt that that the teachers lacked the motivation and training to use this time on the students' behalf. She explained that "only isolated packs of dedicated teachers were willing to put in the effort" and that it would not be possible to expect this effort from all teachers. Arguing, "You can't because where the industry is built on casual staff who have realistically very little hope of becoming permanent staff, uhh it's almost .... Why do they have to go the extra mile?" (Bunts-Anderson, 2000b)

This statement seemed to confirm what I was reading in the literature; but if learners' out-of-class interactions were considered to be outside the framework of

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[6] Many of the findings mentioned are described in detail in the following published references: (Bunts-Anderson, 2000a, 2000c).

[7] In this hypothesis, for learners to acquire a language it is necessary that learners *understand* the meaning of the communication or language input (either in written or oral form) presented by the teacher, in a structure that is just a "little beyond" the student's current level of ability (K. Johnson & Johnson, 1998).

students' self-study time, how were they approached in classroom teaching? When was an appropriate time to focus on out-of-class interactions? Teachers clearly were considered to have some responsibility over the management of classroom discourse: designing courses, planning lessons, deciding what was taught as well as assessing what was learned. What were teachers' conceptions of out-of-class interactions in second language learning? Why was there so much research on the various types of interactions that occurred in the classroom, but very little insight published on L2 teachers' conceptions of classroom discourse? Were teachers' conceptions of interactions both in and outside the classroom considered important; and what sort of influence did teachers' conceptions have on how they approached the teaching and learning inside and outside of the classroom?

1.3 Second Language Literature: Teachers' Conceptions and Out-of-class Interactions

1.3.1 L2 Learners and Teachers

An initial review of literature (see Table 1.1)[8] on these topics suggested a definite imbalance between the large amount of literature published on second language learners' conceptions of L2 learning and interactions (40 publications) and second language teachers' conceptions of the same phenomena (20 publications). Studies and publications of learners' conceptions are numerous and varied; researchers have explored the influence of students' knowledge on the process of learning a target language in terms of acquiring or improving literacy skills, vocabulary, question forms,

[8] Table 1.1 only outlines literature in a preliminary search; it does not attempt to represent the multitude and complexity of studies that have been done on learners' perceptions and conceptions of language learning. Oxford, for example, almost twenty years ago used 60 strategies identified from previous literature on L2 learning to develop the Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL). SILL classified the relations between learners' thinking and actions as cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, social and affective (Oxford, 1986).

grammar, etc.). In comparison there seemed to be only a few studies conducted specifically on teachers' conceptions (see S. Borg, 1998b; Freeman, 1993; Woods, 1991). The vast majority of publications on L2 teachers' beliefs, however, appeared to be referring to these beliefs as a contextual factor that may or may not hinder or promote various curriculum innovations, the implementation of teaching methodologies, or the design of classroom learning environments (Boekaerts, 1994; A. L. Brown, 1994).

Table 1.1 Initial Review: L2 Conceptions and Interactions

L2 Learners			*L2 Learners*			*L2 Teachers*		
yr	author	title	yr	author	title	yr	author	title
1980	Corder	Error analysis	1995	Chen	Cultural and Academic Achievement: Ethnic and	1977	Strevens	New orientations in the teaching of English
1981	Brown	Affective factors in second language	95/96	Collins	The accent ceiling	1981	Krashen	Effective second language acquisition insights from
1983	Wallerstein	Language and culture in conflict: problem	1996	Janzen	Teaching strategic reading	1989	Cooper	Language planning and social change
1985	Littlejohn	Learner choice in language study	1996	Schachter	Second Language Classroom Research:	1991	Woods	Teacher interpretations of second language teaching
1985	Ellis	Understanding second language acquisition	1996	Sorrell	Triadic approach to reading comprehension	1993	King	From sage on the stage to guide on the side
1986	Boulouffe	Intake as the locus of equilibrium in language	1996	Little	Strategic competence and the learner's strategic control of	1993	Freeman	Conceptions of teaching and education of second language
1987	Abrahim	Strategies of two language learners: A case study	1997	Kucan	Thinking aloud and reading comprehension research:	1994	Boekaerts	Motivation in education
1987	Lambiotte	Manipulating cooperative scripts for	1997	Strevens	New orientations in the teaching of english	1994	A. Brown	The advancement of learning
1988	Nunan	The Learner-Centred Curriculum	1998	Boekaerts	Boosting students' capacity to promote their	1994	Bruer	Schools for Thought
1989	Nunan	Designing tasks for the communicative	1999	Boekaerts	Self-Regulated Learning: where we are today	1996	Bull	The literacy lexicon
1989	Webb	Peer interaction and learning in small	1999	Gass	The Effects of Task Repetition on Linguistic	1996	Nunan	The self -directed teacher: managing the learning
1990	Natasi	Social-Cognitive interactions, motivation, and cognitive growth in	1999	Hatano	Commentary: alternative perspective on transfer and transfer studies	1997	Hickling-Hudson	Knowing Ourselves': Australian teachers and cultural diversity
1992	Heyman	Achievement Goals and Intrinsic Motivation: Their Relation and	1999	Kehr	Self-Regulation, self control, and management training transfer	1997	Burns	Valuing diversity: Action researching disparate learner groups
1992	Pressley	Encouraging mindful use of prior knowledge: attempting to construct explanatory answers	1999	Kubota	Japanese culture constructed by discourses: implications for applied linguistics	1997	Ellis	SLA research and language teaching
1993	Boxer	Complaints as Positive Strategies: What the Learner Needs to Know	1999	Lemos	Students' goals and self-regulation in the classroom	1998	Borg	Data-based teacher development
1993	Graves	Learner managed learning	1999	Light	Social processes in children's learning	1998	Borg	Teachers' pedagogical systems and grammar
1993	Heath	Inner city life through drama: imagining the language classroom	1999	Vauras	Motivational vulnerability as a challenge for educational interventions	1998	Norton	Practices imperfect
1993	Lightbown	How Languages are Learned	2000	Bunts-Anderson	Self-Access, can Learner autonomy be better achieved in the future	2000	Damhuis	A different teacher role in language arts education: Interaction in a small circle
1994	Ellis	The study of second language acquisition	2000	Boekaerts	Handbook of self-regulation	2000	R. Brown	Cultural Continuity and ELT Teacher Training
1994	King	Guiding knowledge construction in the classroom: Effects of	2001	Norton	Changing perspective on good language learners	2000	Boyd	How teachers can build on student-proposed intertextual links to

In an article outlining advances on learning and the impact of theory on teaching practices, A. L. Brown (1994) describes learning as an active process where learners benefit from sharing knowledge and experience with others—in "a community of learners" where the teacher learns along with the students "as well as assists their efforts" (p. 8). The implication is that the teacher as part of the group would be sharing knowledge and experience; however, within the article the teacher is explicitly positioned outside the learning process as "a provider of expert guidance" or as a tool: "Instruction is a major class of aids and tools to enhance the mind" (p. 4).

The imbalance I discovered between our understanding of learners' conceptions and teachers' conceptions of interactions was also noted by others (Bruer, 1994; Cooper, 1989; Freeman & Richards, 1993), and it was illustrated not only by differences in quantity but also in quality. Learners' conceptions of classroom interactions were often the topic of research, whereas teachers' knowledge and practices were often described as factors or tools external to the actual interactional/learning process. This contrast between how L2 teachers' conceptions and L2 learners' conceptions were reported was commented on by Freeman and Richards (1993) who argued that the lack of research on L2 teachers' conceptions represented a large gap in our current understanding of the L2 learning and teaching process, and that such research was both critical and overdue:

> In the field of second language instruction, we have been slow to recognize that teaching needs to be examined and understood on its own terms. Conceptions of language teaching and the work of language teachers which shape the multiple activities in the field of second language instruction are generally tactic and often go unquestioned." (p. 193)

1.3.2 Out-of-Class Interactions

A similar imbalance between the available L2 research on in-class and out-of-class interaction was also evident in the literature. In Table 1.1, for example, 11 of the 60 publications reviewed specifically focus on the teaching and learning that occurs through L2 in-class interactions. In comparison only 3 out of 60 publications mention out-of-class interactions in L2 learning in great detail (Cooper, 1989; Norton, 1998; Wallerstein, 1983). The focus of these publications was to raise awareness of the important role that both in and out-of-class interactions play in developing L2 learners' social and cultural identity, rather than outlining specific teaching and learning processes related to these interactions. More explicit descriptions regarding the relations between interactions and teaching and learning were evident in the general education literature such as in reading comprehension (Kucan & Beck, 1997), in science instruction (Driver et al., 1994), and in descriptions of social processes in children's learning (Hudson-Hickling, 1997; Light & Littleton, 1999).

Information regarding L2 teachers' conceptions of out-of-class interactions was conspicuously absent in the literature. However, the influence of teachers' conceptions was highlighted by Cooper's work where L2 teachers were encouraged to reflect on these interactions in the planning process (1989) and by both Boyd and Norton who discuss the emergence of teachers' conceptions during classroom discussions and the impact this may have on students' learning both in and outside the classroom (Boyd & Maloof, 2000; Norton, 1998). From a L2 learner perspective, the beliefs learners hold regarding the influence of both in-class and out-of-class interactions on individual language learning appeared to be widely acknowledged and were briefly mentioned or referred to in many of the publications reviewed—most particularly in the literature

focused on learners' choices or the development of an independent learning process (Lemos, 1999; Littlejohn, 1985).

The large number of students that choose to attend education institutions in countries where the target language is spoken also underlines the fact that language learners perceive their language learning to be highly influenced by the opportunity to interact with members of target language community (see Literature Review Part A, Section 2.11 for Australian statistics; for international statistics see United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 1996; for educational implications see Fasold, 1984; Heyneman, 2000a, 2000b, 2001). In fact, these out-of-class interactions have been perceived by both learners and language theorists to be the most important factor in second language development in a number of studies (Nesdale, Simkin, Sang, Burke, & Fraser, 1995; O'Donnell, 1994; Pica, 1998; Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Paninos, & Linnell, 1996; Polanyi, 1995). However, to date there has been very little research into teachers' perceptions of these interactions and how their conceptions relate to their teaching approaches.

1.4 Current Investigation

Much of the past research on language teachers has focused on teaching methodologies; that is, what they do in the classroom (Oxford, 1990; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998; Slavin, 1994; Wallace, 1998). The conceptions behind particular teaching approaches or activities is a relatively new focus of research in the area of language learning. This focus on language teachers' beliefs emerged in the last decade and has increasingly emerged as an area of importance that should be investigated:

> It is obvious that what teachers do is directed in no small measure by what they think ... to the extent that observed teaching behaviour is "thoughtless," it

makes no use of the human teacher's most unique attributes. In so doing, it becomes mechanical and might as well be done by a machine" (National Institute of Education [NIE], 1975, p. 1).

Research into student learning has clearly shown the importance of shifting the focus from learning approaches to learning conceptions in developing and improving the outcomes of student learning (Little, 1996; Norton, 1998; Swan & Smith, 1987; Van Lier, 1988). Studies have also reported on the relationships between informal and formal learning in related areas; examples include Guinella's work with migrant children and literature (1992), D. W. Johnson and Johnson's work on comparisons of children's learning through structured classroom discourse and individual study (1985), and Boultin-Lewis's work on minority university students' conceptions of learning (Boulton-Lewis, Marton, Lewis, & Wilss, 2000).

Numerous qualitative and quantitative studies have also reported an association between approaches to learning and students' learning outcomes (Freeman & Richards, 1993; Nunan & Lamb, 1996; Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Williams, 1999). A few studies have attempted to explicitly map the links between learners' prior conceptions, conceptual development, learning approaches and eventual learning outcomes (Abraham & Vann, 1987). If these studies on learners are any indication, investigations into the relations between conceptions and approaches to teaching will greatly enhance our understanding of ways of improving teaching (and student learning).

To my knowledge, this is the first investigation to focus on relations between second language teachers' descriptions of conceptions of out-of-class interactions and actual teaching practices. Support for this inquiry comes from the importance placed on these interactions in L2 learning research and on previous work on teachers'

conceptions in other fields. Research into teachers' conceptions is a relatively new focus of inquiry in the field of language teaching (Constantino, 1994; De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Goodlad, 1990). Although there has been a growing body of work in the area of literacy (Anstey & Bull, 1996; Bull & Anstey, 1996), the absence of such research is particularly evident when the subject is the teaching of speaking and listening skills in a second language (Duarte, 1998).

To borrow a metaphor from Bruer (1994), "The world didn't need Isaac Newton to know *that* apples fall off trees. It did need Newton to give us a general theory of *why* apples fall off trees" (p. 17). Similarly second language educators and researchers *know* that L2 teachers influence the process of learning and teaching language. We also know that much of the teaching in L2 classrooms is done through discourse in the target language and that much of individual language learning takes place outside the classroom context. It follows that how these teachers conceive of learning and teaching through these interactions influences how learners approach their own learning. What we don't know is how and why this occurs. Knowing why or how something occurs is an important achievement. Knowing why leads to other discoveries; knowing why apples fall off trees has allowed us to explore space travel to the moon. Still, before we can discover *how* and *why* L2 teachers' beliefs and actions influence this process, we must first identify what these conceptions are.

At this point I realised that the investigation would need to attempt to identify more than one teacher's conceptions of out-of-class interactions. If teachers' conceptions regarding these out-of-class interactions were completely unique or if there were general conceptions shared by a group of teachers, this could only be discovered by exploring the beliefs of a group of individuals. In addition, if the results of such an exploration were to be practically useful, the investigation would also need to explore

how these interactions were approached in the learning and teaching that occurred in the classroom. This realisation situated the investigation within a classroom context rather than in a self-access situation; it also provided the opportunity to explore teachers' conceptions of *real life*[9] data (in-class interactions).

Intuitively I decided that if conceptions of one phenomenon could be identified, then perhaps a description of one would inform my understanding of another. From an investigative standpoint, this appeared to be a good decision, as regardless of the results, both questions could be asked; and a comparison of responses, whether completely different or similar, seemed to be a logical approach. As it turned out this was a fortuitous turn in the inquiry because, as in any investigation of the unknown, deciding to investigate L2 teachers' conceptions of two rather than one phenomenon provided some interesting and unexpected results. What had initially begun as an expanded exploration into the current opportunities students had to work on these spoken interactions in their language development had evolved into questions regarding teachers' conceptions of phenomena: what were these conceptions; how did they develop; did these conceptions influence practice; and more specifically, how were out-of-class interactions approached (if at all) in the actual teaching and learning that was experienced in the classroom. After much reflection the scope of the investigation was limited to the following four questions.

1.4.1 Research Questions:

1. What are the L2 teachers' conceptions of out-of-class interactions?

[9] The term "real life data" here refers to those interactions that the teacher had firsthand knowledge of, either as a participant or as an observer, rather than interactions that they had not experienced themselves.

2. What, if any, is the relationship between L2 teachers' conceptions of out-of-class interactions and their descriptions of actual teaching practices?

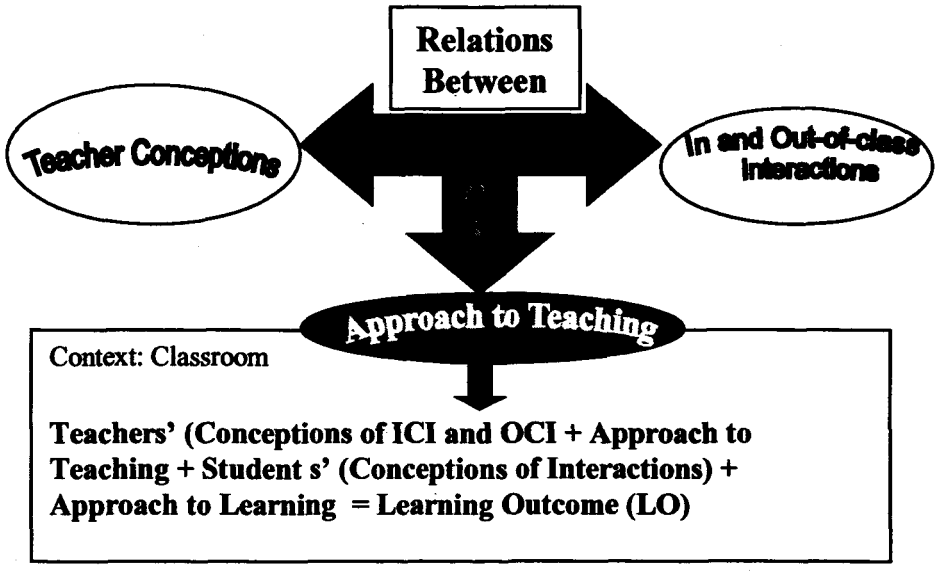
3. What are the L2 teachers' conceptions of in-class interactions?

4. What, if any, is the relationship between L2 teachers' conceptions of in-class interactions and their descriptions of actual teaching practices?

1.4.2 Statement of Topic

Studies of adult student learning have shown that students enter a learning situation with pre-existing conceptions of language learning that sometimes change (Horowitz, 1988); and most importantly, these conceptions appear to relate strongly to how they approach study (Anderson et al., 2000; Boekaerts, Pintrich, and Zeidner, 2000b; A. L. Brown, 1994; Duke, Forbes, Hunter, and Prosser, 1998). This project looks at the parallel situation for teachers. It looks at the understanding that teachers have of in-class and out-of-class interactions in language learning and the relationship this has on their approach to teaching (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. 1 *Relations between teachers' conceptions of in and out-of-class interactions and teaching/learning.*



In planning the investigation two possible outcomes of the inquiry were suggested: 1) from a broad review of L2 literature it was generally expected that those teachers with a better understanding of either phenomena would be more likely to integrate these interactions in practice (Freeman & Richards, 1993; Janzen, 1996; King, 1994; Nunan & Lamb, 1996); and 2) as there was significantly more information in the literature on in-class interactions than out-of-class interaction, it was more likely that teachers would have a better understanding of the former than the latter.

1.4.3 Investigative Approach

The overall aim of all second language research is to develop an understanding of language development. Generally, it could be argued that theoretically this investigation is underpinned by a firm interactionist stance. That is, I believe that when spoken second language is the subject, it is best learned within a *social context* and

through *social interactions*. Instead of focusing on English as a second language as a "whole subject," this investigation will specifically focus on the topics outlined in the "Thesis Aims" as they pertain to the teaching and learning of out-of-class interactions. This is a new form of inquiry in the area of second language teaching and learning, and for that reason the proposed investigation does not build directly on previous research or conveniently fit into a clear gap identified through reviewing literature on language development except in so far as the whole areas of out-of-class interactions and L2 teachers' conceptions represent "gaps." Instead, this proposal attempts to address current issues of concern in second language teaching and learning through reviewing our current understanding and applying knowledge and methodology developed in other disciplines.

Through much deliberation and reflection, I believe that many of these issues will be best addressed, and ensuing questions best approached, by methodologically applying the "constitutionalist"[10] model and using one of its forms, "phenomenography" (for a more in-depth description see Chapter 3). Phenomenography has both theoretical and methodological elements. In general it is a research approach that focuses on describing how a phenomenon is understood by identifying the various ways it is experienced by a group of individuals in a very similar context. This research approach has been successfully implemented in other educational fields for a number of years and has been described as "an approach to identifying, formulating, and tackling certain sorts of research questions, a specialisation that is particularly aimed at questions of relevance to learning and understanding in an educational setting" (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 111). Methodologically, the purpose of explorations into conceptual understanding is to

uncover what (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999) describes as "a relationship between the person experiencing and the object experienced" (p. 13). In this case the person experiencing is the teacher, the "object experienced"[11] is (collectively) the different ways that a group of teachers report their awareness of these out-of class interactions in the teaching and learning of second language. It is my belief that such an investigation will also provide new insights into the role of these out-of-class interactions in language development; and by so doing; it will inform our understanding of ways of improving teaching and learning of languages.

[10] Epistemologically a constitutionalist perspective is a non-dualistic perspective which holds that the world and the individual are internally related through the individual's awareness of the world and the aspects of the world he or she experiences (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999, p. 13).

[11] In many theoretical approaches, what is to be learned is identified as "X" and the process of learning X is described in a series of steps or as a growing awareness. From a phenomenographic perspective what is learned is perceived as internally connected to what is experienced—what is learned cannot be separated from the person's experience of that phenomena. We have to understand the different aspects of what is experienced before we can attempt to describe it. However, we can explore those situations when a particular phenomenon is at the forefront of someone's awareness. In this case, I will be specifically exploring teachers' experiences of in-class and out-of-class interactions through their own descriptions, and the object of experience at this point would be best described as the relations between L2 teachers' awareness of out-of-class interactions and the teaching and learning of second language.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

A man who reviews the old so as to find out the new is qualified to teach others.

– Confucius (K'ung Fu-tzu) 551-479 BC

Chinese philosopher, textual translation
Wing-tsitchan, *Analects* Ch. 2, VII, 1963

2.1 Part A: Focus On Out-Of-Class Interactions

To better understand how the aims of this thesis fit into what we already know about second language education, the literature review will begin with background information on the questions posed and will then further explain the *object experienced* (in-class and out-of-class interactions) through a critical overview looking at the key role these interactions are perceived to play in language development, from three perspectives: the learners', learning theory, and dominant models of teaching/learning. The review will also give a historical overview of the types of research that have been done previously on the relationship between teaching practices and learning in the area of ESL. These will be contrasted with phenomenographic studies conducted in other areas. Finally, the researcher will situate the investigation proposed within the literature discussed.

2.1.1 The Overseas ESL Learner in Australia

In the Australian context, the education and training of overseas students has become a huge and rapidly increasing business. The number of full-time overseas students enrolled in Australian education institutions was reported to be 322,776, as of

December 2004. Almost half of the total enrolments of full-time overseas students has been in the higher education sector, with numbers significantly increasing over the past few decades—from 13,700 overseas students reported to be enrolled in tertiary institutions in 1983, and 42,600 students in 1993, to 151,798 students in 2003 (Australian Education International [AEI], 2005a, 2005d; Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs [DETYA], 2000).

The purpose of study for many of these overseas students from non-English-speaking countries clearly includes a desire to improve their proficiency in English as a second language, both through taking content courses in English and receiving formal language training. This is evident in the large selection of courses designed specifically to cater to the needs of those with non-native speaking (NNS) backgrounds on offer across Australian education sectors; most dominantly, the largest growth sector has been the institutions of higher learning, with a 12% increase in student enrolments reported in December 2004. Large numbers of overseas students also enrol directly in formal English training institutions, and these numbers have increased as well, with 36,831 students reported to have attended ELICOS courses in 2000 (AEI, 2000) and 61,649 enrolled in 2004 (AEI, 2005a).

The impact of these students on the Australian economy is evident, with an average stay of 12.1 weeks reported for overseas students with student visas enrolled in English programs in Australian educational institutions, and $849 million in annual revenue reported to be generated by overseas students enrolled in ELICOS institutions alone in 2003 (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2000; AEI, 2005b). The intent of learning language through use is also supported by frequent reports claiming that learners consider the ability to socially interact effectively with a target language

community to be a major factor in their language progress (Nunan, 1996; Stoneberg, 1995).

Yet, despite L2 learners' evident belief that social interactions promote language learning, the reality suggests that merely having the opportunity to practice the target language is not enough. Two detailed studies of overseas students who have completed high-level tertiary degrees in Australia reported that a majority of these students did not perceive their interactions with Australians to be successful. In fact, the majority of the students that participated in the studies perceived problems with these outside interactions as major barriers to progress in their language acquisition (Nesdale et al., 1995; O'Donoghue, 1996).

Some researchers claim that these interactional problems could be related to individual learning characteristics such as intelligence, aptitude, and personality (Lightbown & Spada, 2001) Others suggest that problems are related to "attribution"; that is, if students view these social interactional problems to be caused by external factors out of their control, they will be less motivated and less likely to continue the learning process (Boekaerts & Minnaert, 1999; Boekaerts et al., 2000b). External factors viewed as relating to interactional problems include things such as: prejudice (Nesdale et al., 1995), racism (O'Donoghue, 1996), gender, lack of social acceptance (Polanyi, 1995), and stereotyping and cultural differences (Chen et al., 1995; Norton, 1998; Halliday, 1975; Hudson-Hickling, 1997; Kubota, 1999; Volet, 1999). From an attribution perspective, upon perceiving these external obstacles as barriers to language development, students would slow or cease in their learning progress.

I would agree that both individual learner characteristics and external factors might inhibit a student's progress as claimed. I would argue that explanations attributing a lack of progress primarily to one or a combination of these factors

identified in a particular study or settings are too simplistic. We know this, because just as some students seemingly fail to progress because of these learner characteristics or external factors, others under the influence of the same factors continue to succeed. Perhaps we need to take a closer look at the social environments in which the learning and teaching of language takes place.

Recently the influences of social environments on teaching and learning (both inside and outside the classroom) have become the focal point of much motivational research, as they are thought to catalyse interpersonal differences in motivation and personal growth (R. C. Gardner, 1985; Mathews, Schwean, Cambell, Saklofske, & Mohamed, 2000; Natasi, Clements, and Battista, 1990; O'Donnell, Dansereau, Hall, and Rocklin, 1987; Pica, 1998; Vauras, Rauhanummi, Kinnunen, and Lepola, 1999). Studies report that various reactions to social contexts seem to result in some people being more self-motivated and better integrated in some situations or cultures than in others (Pintrich, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Salili, 1995).

Such research is particularly important in the area of language learning when we consider the growing numbers of language learners that travel and study abroad precisely for the opportunity to interact outside the classroom. It is evident that from a learner's perspective these out-of-class interactions are viewed to be a necessary element to successful language development. Problems with these out-of-class interactions are not confined to individuals or particular groups and have been reported in a variety of second language situations (Kubota, 1999; Polanyi, 1995). For the student studying a language in a target-language-speaking country (ESL student studying in Australia) there appears to be a tenable relationship between the spoken interactions that occur in a social context outside the classroom and the learner's language development (Aiken & Pearce, 1994; Natasi et al., 1990). Thus developing an

understanding of the relationship between teachers' conceptions of these out-of-class interactions and teaching practice has important implications for the teaching and learning of language both in Australia and abroad.

2.1.2 Theoretical Perspectives

When we begin to review the literature, it is unarguably clear that learners' social interactions (or, for the purpose of this paper, the spoken language used to communicate with others) is considered an essential element of learning in a number of theories (DeVries, 1997; Feuerstein, Klien, and Tannenbaum, 1991; McLaren, 1999; Von Glasersfeld, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978; M. Williams & Burden, 1997; see also the *General theories and models of self-regulation* section in Boekaerts et al., 2000). It is also evident that many language-teaching methodologies are closely tied with theory on learning and knowing. This is not surprising in that language is considered a primary tool for knowledge development from a number of these theoretical perspectives. Regrettably, this inseparable link between language and learning complicates the task of clarifying exactly how these various theoretical implications pertain explicitly to the teaching and learning of language as a subject.

With the risk of oversimplification, I will discuss a few of the most well-known theoretical perspectives on learning, in an attempt to show how these link to dominant theories of language learning, teaching practices, and significantly for the purpose of this paper, perspectives on spoken interactions in second language development. I must also emphasise that I will specifically discuss the teaching of English as a second language rather than other languages in general. I do this in recognition of the many countries today where multilingualism is the norm and these second languages are still

for the most part learned informally rather than taught in the language classroom (Knight, 2001).

One perspective on learning often described as the "cognitivist or information processing perspective" views information as coming to the learner from the outside. It is then stored for a short time, processed internally, and then kept in longer-term storage, or some type of output is generated to the outside world (Nolan, 1994; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). A model of teaching from this view would be termed "teacher-centred" with knowledge viewed as a commodity that is transferred from the teacher to the student (empty vessel) (Moore, 2001).

Another perspective referred to as the "individual constructivist perspective" views knowledge as constructed internally. The individual continually tests this knowledge through interacting with the outside world (Von Glasersfeld, 1995). From this perspective, knowledge is seen to be acquired by the learners themselves. A model of teaching would view the learner to be like a plant that grows in response to the correct "nutrients" provided at just the right time (Moore, 2001).

In the "social-constructivist perspective," like the individual constructivist perspective, knowledge is thought to develop internally, but the process is driven or guided through social interactions between the individual and the outside world (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). Therefore, the teacher's role would be to provide opportunities for learning and developing. The learner's role would be to consider the learning opportunities and make choices about what is to be learned and when (Mercer, 1995). Learning is viewed as collaboratively and socially constructed through active participation in sociocultural activities (Rogoff, Matusov, & White, 1996). From this perspective the teacher and learner collaborate and negotiate learning as part of a "community of learners" (Wells, 1994). Researchers have discussed the effect of being

a part of a community both in and outside the language classroom, and the importance of interaction opportunities to language learning (for an overview see Norton & Toohey, 2001).

When discussing theories of learning, "interaction with others" could describe a number of communication forms (symbols, visual communication, written texts and so on); however, as this project is concerned with spoken interaction, I will focus on spoken language. Language in each of these perspectives is conceived very differently; yet, whether it is considered as the means by which knowledge is transferred, tested, guided or socially constructed, it is clear that from each of these perspectives spoken interaction plays a key role in the process of learning. In the context of learning language, these interactions with others are doubly important; not only are they viewed as integral to the process of learning, but they are also critical as the subject learned is the language used in these interactions with others.

2.1.2.1 Theories of language development

When we take an historical overview of theories on language development, it is evident that these theories are very closely aligned with the perspectives on learning discussed previously. One of the better-known perspectives is the "Biological or Innatist perspective." According to Chomsky, the human mind is pre-programmed to acquire symbolic systems, such as language and knowledge of the physical and social environment (Vosniadou, 1996). He believes that children are born with a special ability to learn language and that the language learner first learns grammatical rules and structures. We could infer then that from this perspective the quality and quantity of the out-of-class interactions a learner engages in, along with any support provided by teachers or peers, should impact upon language progress.

Critiques of this perspective claim the problem with this theory is that the way the learners put this knowledge to use to carry on conversation is unknown (Boulima, 1999). Nevertheless, the influence of this perspective on teaching methodology can be evidenced in the number of textbooks on language learning that continue to teach grammar based on a syntactic, "how words are put together to form phrases or sentences" system, derived from research on how children learn their L1 (Lightbown & Spada, 1993)

2.1.2.1.1 Critical Pedagogy Perspective

Paulo Freire, generally considered the inaugural philosopher of the "Critical pedagogy perspective," believed that schools should be spaces where uncoerced interaction could be created, and he generally emphasised the connectedness between the school, the state and the wider social community (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). He stressed non-distorted or practical language teaching that would be useful to the student, and this perspective is often viewed as the basis of teaching approaches such as whole language instruction and adult literacy programs. Unfortunately, in regard to the relationship between out-of-class interactions and language development there is only one area that has been researched sufficiently enough to justify claims that social factors play a significant role in the L2 learning process.

This area, sometimes termed "community of practice," has developed from the findings of a number of studies conducted on children learning a second language and the impact of the value the learners' own community perceives the target language to hold. The academic achievement in immersion programs for majority children, such as the French immersion programs in Canada (Swain, 1985, 1995, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 1995, 1998), have been far less successful with minority students, as for example with

those implemented for Hispanic children in the United States (for an overview see Mohan, 1986).

Unfortunately, most of these studies have applied to the second language learning that occurs in a situation where the learner is a child who has immigrated to the country but lives within a community that speaks their first language. The influence of the "community of practice" does not appear to be as applicable to the situation of the adult overseas student who lives in a country for the express purpose of learning a L2 but may use their native language with new acquaintances of the same first language background (see section 2.1.4.3 or the work of Elsa Auerbach [Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987] for community-based programs with adults).

The best-known hypothesis for the influence of social factors in adult second language learning would be the "Acculturation" hypothesis proposed by Schumann, which attributes the failure or success of language acquisition to the learner's social and psychological integration within the target language community (1978, 1988). He described these factors under the notion of social distance; if the learner was a member of a group that isolated itself, or of a group that was very small, or if one group dominated the other, the social distance would be high and consequently the success at language learning low.

Like the attribution theory, the acculturation theory relates to groups in an immigration situation, whose members, due to culture shock, fear of identity loss, or low motivation, may have low success at language learning. Intriguing as this idea is, little support for the applicability of this hypothesis to language learning has materialised. Schumann's hypothesis has been widely criticised by researchers that claim 1) second language theory cannot be based on the inability of a single learner

(Alberto) to acquire a second language (K. Johnson & Johnson, 1998), or 2) it does not apply to short visits abroad or to foreign language situations (Andersen, 1990).

2.1.2.1.2 The Behaviorist Perspective

"The Behaviorist perspective" is often attributed to the psychologist Skinner (1957), who claimed that language learning is simply a matter of habit formation, developed when the learner imitates the sounds and patterns they hear around them. Teaching approaches such as the "Audio lingual method" (ALM) directly originated from the behaviorist perspective. Learners were presented with target language patterns for memorisation and learning was thought to occur through practice dialogues and drills (Freeman & Richards, 1993).

For a long time this perspective was put aside in favour of a more complex view on language learning, or an emphasis on communication skills (Lightbown & Spada, 1993). Nevertheless there has been a recent resurgence of behavioristic approaches, due in part to a reaction to findings from a wide range of immersion and naturalistic studies, which suggest that when L2 learning is solely focused on communicative success, some linguistic features do not develop to target-like accuracy (Harley, 1992; Harley & Swain, 1984; Spada & Lightbown, 1989; Williams, 1999). The teacher again is viewed as having an active role in the language learning process, as it is believed to be their role to draw the learners' attention to form and structures in the language (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long, 1996; N. Ellis, 1993; Robinson, 1996, 1997). It has also been claimed that grammar instruction and a curriculum emphasising literacy is particularly effective within a communicative context (Doughty & Verela, 1998; Long, Inagaki, & Ortega, 1998; Spada & Lightbown, 1993; Swain, 1998; J. Williams & Evans, 1998).

Dewey, known for his "learning by doing" perspective, agreed with Skinner (1957) that the process of language learning was best investigated through applying "scientific methods." Dewey was particularly interested in the role of language in adolescent learning, and he developed a series of school laboratory experiments, stating, "The assumption of an educational laboratory is rather that enough is known of the conditions and modes of growth to make intelligent inquiry possible; and that it is only by acting upon what is already known that more can be found out" (Dewey, 1915, p. 89). Bibliographic research into Dewey's life and philosophies suggest that Dewey's scientific approach to education was due in part to scientific advancements that occurred in Dewey's lifetime, and that his "experiential" approach to learning is better elucidated in his later works (e.g., "Lessons of Art") than in his early comments on the philosophy of education (Boisvert, 1997). Central to Dewey's beliefs, though, was the role of language and social interaction; he considered communication as the means by which events were transformed into meanings, and termed language "the tool of tools" (cited in Garrison, 1996, p. 134). The behaviorist perspective is perhaps the most frequently criticized and is often termed "traditional" or "teacher-centred," and condemned for not providing students with the skills needed to communicate in the real world. In spite of this criticism, of the three perspectives discussed, the behaviorist seems to provide the most obvious support for a focus on out-of-class interaction.

Dewey in his writings and lectures often underlined the role of "natural language," stating, "There is a natural bridge that joins the gap between existence and essence, namely communication, language discourse" (cited in Garrison, 1996, p. 53). A reporter following Dewey and his daughter through the Chicago laboratory school experiments noted that many of the "learning by doing" classes were held outside the classroom (Boisvert, 1997). In discussing learning outside the classroom, Dewey

(1915) claimed that the presence of physical stimuli or knowledge of a subject taken out of social context was insufficient: "Studies of childhood have made it equally apparent that this socially acquired inheritance operates in the individual only under present social stimuli" (p. 91). Dewey's belief that the coordination of social behavior was the heart of language and the origin of meaning has caused his views to be categorized by some as social constructivism rather than purely behaviorist in nature (Dewey, 1925/1981; Prawat, 1995). Today his writings are also frequently cited as support for "experiential" approaches to teaching (see Task-Based Teaching, Section 2.1.5).

2.1.2.2 Problems with theories

In relation to the thesis presented, the biggest difficulty with these theories is their lack of definition in regard to interaction. There is also no observable differentiation made between interactions that occur in the classroom and outside the classroom. This might account for the disproportionate amount of research that has been largely classroom-based (A. L. Brown & Palinscar, 1989; Oxford, 1994; M. L. Simpson, Hynd, Nist, & Burrell, 1977; Topping & Ehly, 1998), rather than focused on out-of-class interactions (Aiken & Pearce, 1994; Bunts-Anderson, 2000c).

Another obvious weakness with many theoretical explanations of how languages are learned is that they have been based on how a child learns their first language (L1). It is clear, however, that a child or an adult learning a second language differs from a child acquiring their first language in terms of the conditions for learning and personal characteristics (Lightbown & Spada, 1993)

In an attempt to address the latter issue, Stephen Krashen, a follower of the Innatist perspective, brought together research findings from a number of diverse areas

for the purpose of developing an all-inclusive theory of language development termed the "Creative Construction Theory" (for an overview see Krashen, 1982, 1985). His theory consists of five central hypotheses: The "acquisition-learning hypothesis," the "monitor hypothesis," the "natural order hypothesis," and the "input hypothesis." Krashen's theory was met with a flurry of research both in support (R. Brown, 1973; Larson-Freeman & Long, 1991) and in refutation of his claims (Boulima, 1999; Day, 1991; Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1995; Tomlin & Villa, 1994). Most of the criticism against his theory is concerned with the vagueness of his hypotheses, suggesting that his definitions are too ambiguous and viewed as impossible to validate. Others have claimed that his "input theory," in particular, is not inclusive enough and focuses only on the knowledge received by the learners without considering what is learned through the production of the language by the learner himself or herself (Swain, 1991).

Nevertheless, it could be argued that only a general theory such as Krashen's could account for the variances in learning characteristics that exist between a child learning their first language and a child or adult learning a second language, while attempting to build on what has been previously discovered about language learning (Lightbown & Spada, 1993). Krashen's work highlighted two points that seem to be the impetus of two primary areas in language development, though often presented in opposition; these areas provide heavy support for a focus on out-of-class interactions. The first is the focus is placed on the learner, rather than the teacher; individual learning is thought to be affected by such things as the motives, needs and emotional states, and attitudes of the learner. The second is that language is acquired when a learner engages in meaningful interaction with others.

2.1.3 The Good Learner Perspective

Much of the research focused on the learner has significant ties with the behaviorist perspective and draws from the area of cognitive psychology, which is particularly interested in the characteristics and learning strategies of successful language learners (see *The Good Language Learner* [Naimen, Fröhlich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978]), and in how language is understood.[12] In relation to language research, a large body of educational research has been conducted on the relationship between motivation and the development of students' *self-regulation skills,* or "a learner's ability to regulate their own learning" (see Borowske, 1990, as cited in Boekaerts, 1994; Boekaerts, 1996, 1998; Boekaerts et al., 2000b).

The evident interest of language learners to work on their outside interactions is especially significant, as lack of motivation, on the part of ESL students, has been one of the major problems cited in their development of self-regulatory skills and learner autonomy (Bowyer, 1995; Cotterall, 1995; Detaramani & Chan, 1996; Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Zimmerman, 1998). These skills are thought to develop through a learning process frequently termed "self-regulated learning" (SRL) and considered to consist of students' self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions, which are systematically oriented toward the attainment of their goals. Teaching methods and tools have been introduced specifically to aid teachers in assisting learners through this process—for example, Willing's *Teaching How to Learn* (1989a, 1989b).

Many researchers believe that it is essential for students to go through this type of learning process, as it encourages learners to be aware of their own learning needs, as well as equipping them with the skills and strategies to learn language in a self-

[12] The *Behaviorist perspective*, which links language structure to human thinking and learning process, has been especially influential, particularly to SLA researchers interested in the development of linguistical structures in language.

directed or "learner autonomous" way (R. Ellis, 1990; R. E. Snow & Lohman, 1984; Boekaerts & Niemvirta, 2000; Weinert & Helmke, 1987; Brownlee, Leventhal, & Leventhal, 2000; Carver & Scheier, 2000; Creer, 2000; De Corte, Verschaffel, & Op't Eynde, 2000; Demetriou, 2000; Endler & Kocovski, 2000; Jackson, Mackenzie, & Hobfoll, 2000; Kehr, Bles, and von Rosenstiel, 1999; Kuhl, 2000). The concept of developing learner autonomy has been particularly influential in the area of second language education, and has been cited by many as the primary goal of educational research and educators (Cotterall, 2000; Natasi et al., 1990; Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Tang & Yang, 1999; see also Benson, 2001).

One reason for the great popularity of the "autonomous learner" concept stems from a belief that once a learner has achieved this state, not only will the student be able to self-direct their own learning, but they will also have more success in their future learning endeavours. The benefits of self-directed learning have been more widely reported in other areas and are often predicted in L2 learning (Maes & Gebhardt, 2000; Mathews et al., 2000; Pintrich, 2000; Randi & Corno, 2000; Rheinberg, Vollmeyer, & Rellett, 2000; Schunk & Ertmer, 2000; Shah & Kruglanski, 2000; Shapiro & Schwartz, 2000; Vancouver, 2000; Weinstein, Husman, & Dierking, 2000; Winnie & Perry, 2000; Zeidner, Boekarts, & Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 2000). Direct support for this belief is evidenced in learners' accounts of their own out-of-class interactional experiences, reported in a few studies, where language learners claim to have used the skills and knowledge acquired in other interactional situations (Aiken & Pearce, 1994; Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987; Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987).

From a good learner perspective, a focus on interactions is also supported by the fact that students' interest and evident motivation to work on and develop their social interactional skills outside the classroom clearly originates in their desire to improve

their social dealings in the target language community; for a good overview see *Changing Perspectives on Good Language Learners* (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Developing learning communities in and outside of the classroom is a topic that most recently has been the focal point of much discussion in motivational research, as influences of social environments are thought to catalyse interpersonal differences in motivation and personal growth (R. C. Gardner, 1985; Mathews et al., 2000; Natasi et al., 1990; O'Donnell et al., 1987; Pica, 1987). Researchers claim that this "new" area is worthy of our most intense investigation particularly in light of the fact that various reactions to social contexts seem to result in some integrated in some situations or cultures than in others (Pintrich, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Salili, 1995). Thus from a research perspective, a focus on students' in-class and out-of-class interactions appears relevant to understanding not only the relationship such interactions have to L2 acquisition, but also how students may improve their social dealings in Australia.

2.1.4 The Communicative Teaching Perspective

The Innatist perspective, particularly Krashen's hypotheses, have been very influential in second language teaching and are reflected in the numerous communicative language teaching (CLT) methodologies that are perhaps the most prevalent influence on teaching today. CLT methodologies also arose in reaction to the behaviourists' grammar-based teaching methods that prevailed in the 1960s. The basis of the communicative teaching movement was primarily formed through convincing critiques of the inadequacies of the linguistic and pedagogical theory underlying grammar-based teaching like the *audio-lingual approach* discussed previously (Freeman & Richards, 1993). Much of the early support for CLT methodologies came from reports of students attaining higher levels of achievement through immersion

programs, where subjects are taught in the target language (TL), in comparison to students that study the TL through formal instruction, as with both the Canadian French immersion programs and adult overseas students studying English (for an overview, see Swain, 1974, and Mason, 1971, as cited in Mohan, 1986). On the other hand, findings from a wide range of immersion and naturalistic studies have also shown that when language learning is solely focused on communicative success, some linguistic features do not develop, strongly suggesting that second language teachers have an important role in the process.

Consequently, the debate that launched and has supported communicative language teaching appears to be more philosophical than empirical, with learning seen to be more successful when it is "communicative" or when the learner is encouraged to interact as much as possible, than when it is predominantly grammar-based. Interestingly, communicative teaching approaches also incorporate the belief that learner needs should be the focus of learning, and therefore teaching approaches have often been encouraged to consider learners' perceptions of what makes a good learner, and to develop classroom teaching based on those particular students' needs (Nunan, 1988, 1989; Willing, 1989a, 1989b).

From the communicative teaching perspective, the overall goal of most language teachers is to assist their students to attain communicative competence in the target language. This term, usually attributed to Dell Hymes, refers to the students' knowledge of the language and ability to use the language effectively and appropriately (Hymes, 1972). To achieve this aim there have been a number of communicative teaching approaches developed from focusing on specific elements of language use and communication observed in outside interactions, with the goal of incorporating these elements into a classroom context. Unfortunately, studies ascertaining the impact of

such approaches suggest that although communicative activities are often based on "real communication," the function of these approaches seems to have been interpreted by many as communicative competence inside the classroom rather than outside the classroom (Oxford & Green, 1996; Pica et al., 1996; K. E. Johnson, 1995; Norton, 1998; Nunan, 1989; Pica, 1998). There are CLT methodologies that claim to have especially strong ties with out-of-class interactions, and to illustrate the important role these "real life" interactions are thought to play in language development, I will briefly discuss three of these "communicative approaches."

2.1.4.1 The functional approach.

The "functional approach" is one of the better-known CLT methodologies and deals with the appropriateness and purposes for which people speak or write (for an overview see Blundell, Higgens, & Middlemiss, 1982). Typically, the functional approach takes in a situation such as "giving an opinion" and asks the students to consider the setting of the conversation, the topic under discussion, and their own psychological attitude towards the topic, along with the student's social relationship with the person(s) speaking (Mohan, 1986). Expanding on this theme, some studies have researched a functional approach to teaching specific elements of language; one very well-known model is Halliday's (1989, 1994) "functional grammar." This model has been a central theme in immersion research, where students that have learned language through content have been found to be lacking in grammar and form (Swain, 1998, 2000). Much of the literature on functional approaches now claims that content-based teaching is most effective when there is a combined focus on form and meaning, both in written and oral discourse (M. L. Jones, 1996; Pica, 2000).

Others claim that a focus on meaning needs to be expanded; that if both social interaction and a focus on form are necessary for language learning (but not sufficient) then we need to look beyond the meaning expressed in the microstructure of a text or contextualized interaction and consider learner identity within the macrostructure of society both in and outside the classroom (Morgan, 2004; Norton & Toohey, 2004). Norton encapsulates this position in an interview with *The Language Teacher*: "In my research I take the position that every time language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with their inoculators—they are also constantly organizing and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world" (Churchill, 2002, p. 3).

I agree with Norton's position and argue that while a functional approach to language learning might be successful in increasing communicative competence, it does not take into account the constantly changing context, spontaneity and role changes that occur in "real world" social interaction. Actually, this stance is now becoming more widespread, for just as the benefits of functional approaches for developing proficiency in specific areas of language are widely appreciated, it is generally acknowledged that this approach is not sufficient in itself; this is noted by Mohan and Beckett (2001); "We are not aware of any evidence of explicit and detailed claims that the correction of errors of grammatical form is a sufficient condition for the development of oral and written language as a medium of learning." (p. 3).

2.1.4.2 The simulations approach.

It was to address these issues specifically that the "simulations approach" was developed. The focus of this approach is to provide learners with role responsibility and reality in a language context by encouraging the students to actively participate in an

event (for an overview see K. Jones, 1982). This event is based on a problem in the real world, and the students are given a real task, such as to produce a radio program, and are frequently encouraged to interact with others outside the classroom to achieve the task. The students then take on real roles (journalists, announcer, interviewer, and producer) and actually produce a radio program that is aired. This approach supports a focus on outside interactions, in that it provides opportunities for increased problem solving skills, and effective communication with peers and sometimes native speakers.

Recently simulation approaches are often tied in with computer simulations or electronic media, and they have been extended to involve role play of specific outside interactions (such as business negotiations) that are considered to fit more with students' specific needs such as business negotiations (see R. S. Davis, 1995; Fannon, 2003a, 2003b; Krauss, 1998). The use of an electronic medium is believed to provide a more real-life simulation for learners and also a means by which students' language proficiency can be better assessed by teachers (Littlejohn, 1990). Yet, I would argue that this approach is limited precisely for being what it is: a simulation rather than a real event. Someone other than the learner often develops the simulation task, so it is doubtful that the task could address all the learners' needs. It is also highly questionable whether a teacher or a textbook would be able to develop the number and variety of simulated tasks required to meet the individual problems currently occurring with the learners' outside interactions.

Ninety years ago Dewey (1915) commented on the limitations of simulated education: "[New knowledge] must be assimilated, not as mere items of information, but as organic parts of his [the student's] present needs and aims which in turn are social" (p. 92). Legutke and Thomas (1997) expand on this idea of active involvement of both teacher and student in society, with their review of "project learning"

(discussed further in 2.1.5) as rooted in educational philosophy and not merely a teaching methodology proposed for second language teachers (p. 158). Legutke and Thomas elucidate the role of outside interactions in three types of projects: "the encounter projects" that take place in "real live encounters" with native speakers in the target language in L1 and L2 environments, "text projects" that take in experiences of native speakers in text form, and "class correspondence projects" that involve encounters and interaction with native speakers through mediated mediums (letters, video) (see pp. 161-166).

2.1.4.3 The problem solving approach.

A more recent communicative-based methodology in language teaching is the "problem posing approach" originally developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (McLaren, 1999). Although there are a number of studies that report the benefits of problem solving in learning language through content by means of classroom discourse (Chamot, Dale, O'Malley, & Spanos, 1992; Natasi et al., 1990; Swain, 1991), there are relatively few studies in ESL problem solving in the realm of student's outside interactions are usually attributed to Elsa Auerbach and Nina Wallerstein (for description and examples, see Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987). Perhaps more appropriately termed "methodology," their approach has three phases: listening or investigating (issues of the community), dialogue (codifying issues into dialogue for critical discussion), and action (strategising the changes students envision after reflection). It specifically looks at problems the learners are having in their social interactions in the community outside the classroom and encourages students to act on these problems.

This approach contains all three elements previously discussed as supporting a focus on out-of-class interactions: the classroom conversational aspect of CTM, the inclusion of social dealings in the community, and the opportunity for learners, both individually and as a group, to develop strategies to change these social interactions. In the limited published information currently available on this approach, the focus has been placed on interactional problems that are generalisable to the entire class, such as doing an interview or dealing with stress. I would argue that this general strategising, while encouraging individual reflection and action, does not reflect the very specific and unique goal setting that would occur if the process was based specifically on individual learners' out-of-class interactions.

In addition, publications based on Auerbach and Wallerstein's work, such as the AMES study at Macquarie University (Aiken & Pearce, 1994), generally report only surface-level reflections and initial strategies. There is no evidence that these goals have been continually monitored, reflected upon, re-evaluated, and changed, as should occur in a developed Critical Thinking Cycle (McLaren, 1999) or in the learning process based on developing self-regulation skill and learner autonomy previously discussed.

2.1.5 Task-Based Teaching

One teaching methodology, "Task-based Teaching," should be mentioned here because it developed from the idea that learning occurs through free practice (Prabhu, 1987). Prabhu calls this "deployment," where the second or foreign language is used in the process of completing a task. Some have argued that task-based teaching is another strand of communicative methodology (Nunan, 2001). Oura (2000) describes task-based teaching as communicative but outlines two distinct differences: "target tasks,

which students need to accomplish beyond the classroom, and pedagogical tasks, which form the basis of classroom activity during instruction" (p. 72). Generally proponents of task-based teaching (TBT) have focused on specific aspects of interaction: meaning, focus on form, skill-based learning, authenticity of materials and interactions, and most recently, authentic learning (Kilickaya, 2004).

Some view task-based teaching as completely separate from CTM. Prabhu, for example, with his "Procedural Syllabus" claims that learning is an outcome of communicational meaning and that communicative methodologies focusing on talk without meaning is only another type of form-based instruction (K. Johnson & Johnson, 1998, p. 72). A. Simpson (2003) appears to agree that there are limits to classroom discourse but argues that current opportunities to focus on form through using modern electronic resources represent real interaction. He claims, "There are clear instances in TBL (Task Based Learning) in which the learner has opportunities to privately practice the language, using it fluently, and publicly show other learners that they can use the language in a fluent and accurate manner. There is no such opportune necessity in other language approaches" (p. 3). Oxford (2001) agrees, summarising TBT as a type of instruction that provides opportunities to integrate multiple learning skills with a focus on the authenticity of the language learned. This integrated skill approach "exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language" (p. 2).

A quick search of Internet resources for L2 teachers suggests that there continues to be a heavy focus in ESL for teachers to integrate authentic real-world materials into their classroom teaching. Using the key words "ESL task based teaching" resulted in 2,974 pages of links to resources and publications on task-based teaching for ESL teachers. When learning language in conjunction with a subject or for a specific

purpose (such as the English for Academic Purposes context of the studies presented later) some educators propose that task-based teaching should be organized in a "project form," and that learning occurs through the various processes made up of a series of tasks that fluctuate and change based on needs (Legutke, 1986; Schiffler, 1980). In project task-based approaches, language learning is believed to occur individually, as well as with peers and teacher. Learning occurs through a shared ownership of the project and through experientially going through various process stages: planning, experiencing, evaluating, presenting, reflection, and so on. Legutke and Thomas (1997), well-known supporters of the project and process approach to teaching and learning, claim that one of the most exciting aspects to project learning is "learning in the here and now"; that the object of learning is to apply it in action; and that the relevancy of action of students' work is immediate (p. 215).

A mere copier of nature can never produce anything great.

– Joshua Reynolds (1723-92)

Discourses on Art (ed. R. Wark, 1975) No. 3 (14, Dec. 1770)

Within the context of the formal language classroom, the strength of communicative teaching methodologies also appears to be their greatest weakness. These methodologies attempt to *model* real-life interactions within a classroom context. These replications are often oversimplified, focused on limited aspects of interaction, and based on interactional situations considered generalisable to an entire group of learners. This is understandable, due to the limitations and confines of teaching within a classroom context; however, no model can accurately portray the intricacies that occur in natural conversation, or represent the specific language learning needs of individual students. These approaches using authentic materials and attempting to emulate real-

world interaction may be the next best thing, and appropriate for students studying a second language in a country in which the target is not spoken (Gebhard, 1996; Kippel, 1991). Then again, for L2 students living in a country precisely for the opportunities to speak the TL outside the classroom, such as ESL students studying English in Australia, we need to ask, "Why aren't more teachers using the real thing?"

2.1.6 The Missing Link—Teachers' Perspectives

When we consider the research previously discussed, a gap in knowledge becomes gravely apparent, as the teachers' perspective seems to have been left out of the equation. The review clearly indicates that social interactions in the target language are considered essential to the process, both from the learner's and a theoretical perspective. There is also an evident correlation between these perspectives and current second language teaching methodologies. From a review of past research, we can ascertain that the perceptions of the learner as well as the opportunity to interact in real life all appear to have a bearing on eventual learning outcomes. This process does not uncover what the perspectives of teachers regarding these out-of-class interactions might be, or in fact suggest what influence they may have, if any, on eventual learning outcomes. Knowledge of learners' perceptions is considered as a necessary element, and learning is viewed to occur primarily within a classroom context (Engel, Bouwhuis, Bösser, & d'Ydewalle, 1992; see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Teaching Methods and Learner Perceptions affecting learning outcomes

Teacher Perceptions	*Instruction Methods* **that impact learning outcomes**	*Learner Perceptions*
?	emphasis on success or failure	Perception of Control
	feedback	Goal orientation
	assessment procedures	Anxiety
	controlling techniques	
	autonomy supporting techniques	Self-concept of ability
	Instructional density	

Adapted from table on teaching practices reported to impact learning outcomes, in Boekaerts, M. (1994), Motivation in Education. (p.4).

It has also been reported that self-regulatory strategies are not easily learned or developed, and that the instruction and scaffolding provided by teachers are viewed as necessary components of the process (Brownlee et al., 2000; De Corte et al., 2000; Pintrich, 1999). Teaching methodologies such as Dufeu's "Language Psychodramaturgy" have been developed to assist the teacher in supporting language learners to develop positive conceptions of themselves and their own language learning (Dufeu, 2001, 2002). Knowledge of the teacher's role in the process seems to be confined to the actions they are expected to perform in practice, rather than understanding the teachers' perceptions of the learning and teaching processes themselves.

Again, when we look specifically for the types of information required in CLT methodologies, which is based on the information learners give and receive through interactions, we find a similar result (see Table 2.2). The information concerning learners' social networks, language goals, background learning experiences, and

perceptions of their ability are considered necessary to achieve second language acquisition. Teachers are encouraged to inquire and develop an in-depth knowledge of the learners' conceptions in their classrooms (King, 1993; McDonough & McDonough, 1997). Conversely, no such knowledge about the teacher is thought necessary (Table 2.2). This is despite the fact that the teacher's role is considered that of a facilitator, a counsellor to the learners, and a manager in the learning process (Nunan & Lamb, 1996). The evident involvement of teachers in a learning process based on students' interactions surely implies that teachers' perceptions are considered to have some influence in the success of L2 learners' learning outcomes.

Table 2.2 Information on Learners Teachers Need to Know

*(*Note all information required is about learners, not teachers)* TYPE OF INFORMATION REQUIRED	PURPOSE
1. Learners' life goals	So that teachers have a basis to determine or predict learners' language goals, communicative networks and social roles
2. Language goals, Communicative networks and social roles	So learners may be placed in a group based on common social roles, and the teacher may make preliminary decisions about course content appropriate to learners' social roles
3. Objective needs, patterns of language use, personal resources	So learners can be grouped according to their needs and/or interests
4. Language proficiency and learning difficulties	So that learners can be grouped according to their language proficiency
5. Subjective needs, including learning strategy preferences, affective needs, learning activity preferences, pace of learning, attitude toward correction	So that teachers may adapt learning activities to learning strategy preferences, individual needs
6. Information about learners' attainment of objectives	So that the teacher can monitor performance and modify program accordingly
7. Information about the developmental processes in second language learning, including learners' communicative strategies	So that teacher can gear language content and materials to learners' stage of development
	Adapted from Nunan, D. (1996) The Self-Directed Teacher, Table 8, (p. 26).

This is an important omission. According to Lemos (1999), the successful implementation of motivational research findings into classroom practices relies heavily on the teachers' individual perceptions and conceptions of the students and learning situation. Similar claims have been made regarding the impact of teacher perceptions on thedevelopment of self-regulated learning skills (Martyn, 1993; Randi & Corno, 2000) and the learner's use of the target language inside the classroom (Morita, 2000; Saravanan & Gupta, 1997). The impact of these teachers' beliefs on classroom practices and motivation are areas of intense investigation in other educational fields such as mathematics (Corrigan, 2000; Crawford, Gordon, Nicholas, and Prosser,

1998a), the sciences (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996; Trigwell et al., 1999), and literacy (Schauber, 1994; Sorrell, 1996).

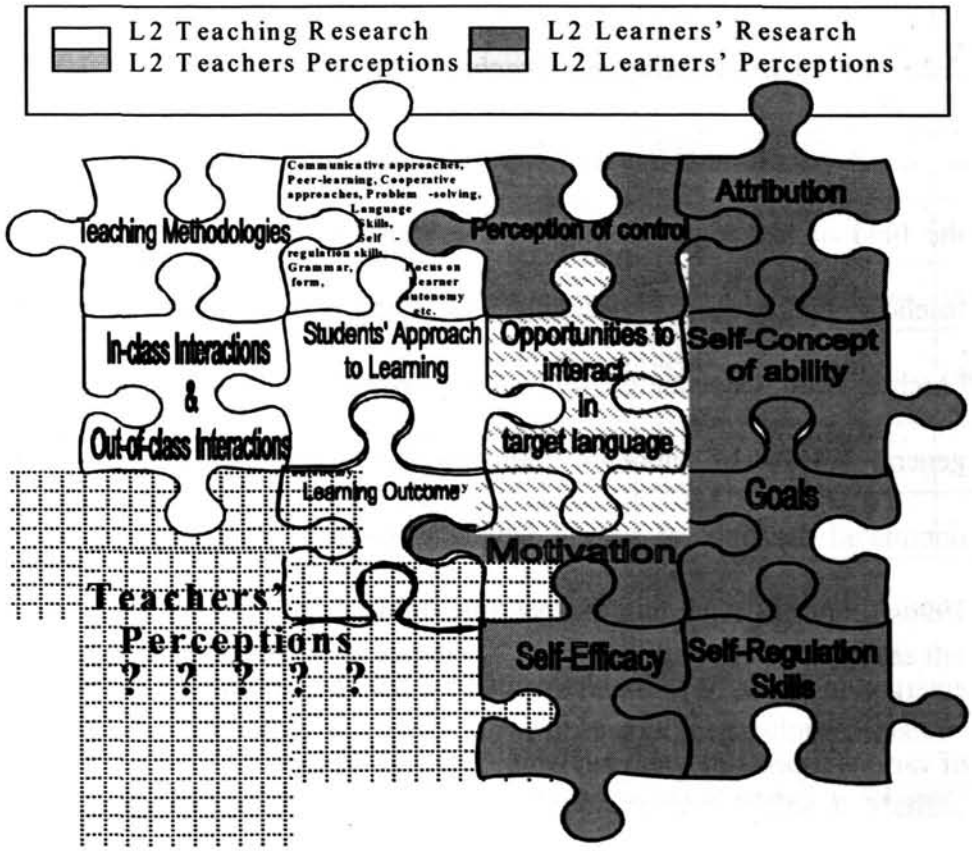
Yet, in the field of ESL education, teachers' perceptions are relatively unknown. Perhaps there is some reluctance to view individual teachers' perceptions as having a unique impact on learning outcomes. Giving significant importance to these perceptions makes a slight movement away from current pedagogy on language learning. Since the 1970's, the focus of language educators and linguists has shifted away from what is often termed as "traditionalism" or the teacher-as-authority role to pedagogy that views learning to be centred on the learner (Nunan, 1996). From this learner-centred perspective it is common to ask, what does the student believe, instead of, what does the teacher believe.

2.1.7 Summary

From the literature reviewed, we know that out-of-class interactions are considered salient in both learners' and theorists' perspectives. It is also evident that we have very little information regarding the teachers' perceptions. Our present understanding of how out-of-class interactions function in the development process is still rather ambiguous. To date, few studies have focused on the effect of outside interactions on the process beyond a generally held belief that social interactions are a means of providing practice in the target language and serve as a source of input to the learner (Long & Crookes, 1992; Pica, 1998; Marini & Genereux, 1995; Martin, 1997). Historically, most of these studies that have focused on interactions have been classroom-based and learner-focused, and although they provide strong support for target language interactions in the acquisition process, most have been inconclusive as to how interactions specifically function in language learning (R. Ellis, 1994).

Consequently, the applicability of class-based findings to other contexts is unknown. A rapidly increasing body of research focused on various aspects of TL interactions in general (Damon & Phelps, 1989; R. Ellis, 1997; Izumi & Bigelow, 2000; Jiang, 2000; Schmidt, 1990) indicates that educators and researchers consider a better understanding of social interactions to be essential in completing the picture. Language teachers' roles should not be viewed as only beneficial for the development of learners' grammatical or linguistic competency (K. E. Johnson, 1996; Long, 1996). Ever apparent is the fact that in many learners' situations the way that teachers perceive and address these out-of-class interactions in their daily teaching practices may relate to the students' learning outcomes (Battista, 1994; M. Williams & Burden, 1997). The uniqueness of this thesis is that it attempts to better understand the phenomenon of out-of-class interactions and language learning from a new vantage point, the perspective of the teacher (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Missing Piece L2 Teachers' Perceptions of In and Out-of-Class Interactions: Teaching & Learning



2.2 Part B: Focus On Teachers' Perspectives

In the previous section, I discussed the significance of focusing this thesis on out-of-class interactions, and pointed out the relative lack of knowledge available in L2 research from the teachers' perspective (see Figure 2.1). In this section of the literature review, I will explore our current understanding of language teachers' perceptions in relation to what is known in other subject areas. This includes examining the status of language teacher cognition research in order to discover if developing a framework or base from which we can better inform our understanding of these perceptions is needed. In addition, I present an overview of why it is necessary to have knowledge of such factors as the origin of teachers' perceptions, language teachers' perceptions of "role," and the value teachers perceive out-of-class interactions to have in language development, if we are to fully understand how these perceptions may influence L2 outcomes.

2.2.1 The Focus on Language Teachers' Perceptions

Research on teachers' perceptions of language learning is rather a new area in the field of language learning. In fact, calls for a better understanding of language teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning are a relatively recent phenomenon (Archer, 2000; Constantino, 1994; De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Goodlad, 1990). A general review of literature indicates (see Table 2.3) that learners' conceptions dominated the field of second language research on conceptions in the 1980s and 1990s. Inquiries regarding the possible influence of teachers' conceptions on practice emerged in the early 1990s, followed by a few focused studies on teachers' conceptions of various aspects of teaching, which started to appear in the latter part of that decade.

Table 2.3 *Learners' and Teachers' Conceptions*

Table 2.3 Learners' Conceptions Teachers' Conceptions

		Learner Conceptions			Learner Conceptions	Teacher Conceptions		
Date	Author	Title	Date	Author	Title	Title	Author	Date
1987	Abrahim	Strategies of Two Language Learners: A Case Study	1996	Little	Strategic competence and the learner's strategic control of the language learning process	Teacher Interpretations of Second Language Teaching Curricula	Woods	1991
1998	Boekaerts	Boosting Students' Capacity to Promote their Own Learning: A Goal Theory Perspective	1990	Natasi	Social-Cognitive Interactions, Motivation, and Cognitive Growth in Logo Programming and CAI Problem-Solving Environments	Motivation in Education	Boekaerts	1994
1999	Boekaerts	Self-Regulated Learning: where we are today	2001	Norton	Changing Perspective on Good Language Learners	Data-Based Teacher Development	Borg	1998
2000	Boekaerts	Handbook of Self-Regulation	1988	Nunan	The Learner-Centred Curriculum	Teachers' Pedagogical Systems and Grammar Teaching: A Qualitative study	Borg	1998
1993	Boxer	Complaints as Positive Strategies: What the Learner Needs to Know	1989	Nunan	Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom	The Advancement of Learning	A. Brown	1994
1981	Brown	Affective Factors in Second Language Learning	1992	Pressley	Encouraging Mindful Use of Prior Knowledge: Attempting to Construct Explanatory Answers Facilitates Learning	Cultural Continuity and ELT Teacher Training	R. Brown	2000
2000	Bunts-Anderson	Self-Access, Can Learner Autonomy Be Better Achieved in The Future Through The Implementation of Co-operative Research	1996	Schachter	Second Language Classroom Research: Issues and Opportunities	Schools for Thought	Bruer	1994
1995	Chen	Cultural and Academic Achievement: Ethnic and Cross-National Differences	1996	Sorrell	Triadic Approach to Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction	The Self -directed Teacher: Managing the learning process	Nunan	1996
1995	Collins	The accent ceiling	1997	Strevens	New Orientations in the Teaching of English	The Literacy Lexicon	Bull	1996
1985	Ellis	Learning to learn English: A course on	1999	Vauras	Motivational Vulnerability as a Challenge for Educational Interventions	Practices Imperfect	Norton	1998
1985	Ellis	Understanding Second Language Acquisition	1983	Wallerstein	Language and Culture in Conflict: Problem posing in the ESL Classroom	Valuing Diversity: Action Researching Disparate Learner Groups	Burns	1997
1994	Ellis	The Study of Second Language Acquisition	1993	Lightbown	How Languages are Learned	Language planning and social change	Cooper	1989
1999	Gass	The Effects of Task Repetition on Linguistic Output	1999	Light	Social Processes in Children's Learning	Error Analysis	Corder	1980
1993	Graves	Learner Managed Learning	1999	Lemos	Students' goals and self-regulation in the classroom	Conceptions of Teaching and Education of Second Language Teachers	Freeman	1993
1999	Hatano	Commentary: alternative perspective on transfer and transfer studies	1987	Lambiotte	Manipulating Cooperative Scripts for Teaching and Learning	From Sage on the Stage to Guide on the Side	King	1993
1993	Heath	Inner City Life Through Drama: Imagining the Language Classroom	1997	Kucan	Thinking Aloud and Reading Comprehension Research: Inquiry, Instruction, and Social	Effective Second Language Acquisition Insights from Research	Krashen	1981
1992	Heyman	Achievement Goals and Intrinsic Motivation: Their Relation and Their Role in Adaptive Motivation	1999	Kubota	Japanese Culture Constructed by Discourses: Implications for Applied Linguistics Research and ELT	Spoken and Written Language	Morris	1980
1997	Hickling-Hudson	Knowing Ourselves': Australian teachers and cultural diversity	1994	King	Guiding Knowledge Construction in the Classroom: Effects of Teaching Children			
1996	Janzen	Teaching Strategic Reading	1999	Kehr	Self-Regulation, Self Control, and Management Training Transfer			

One area frequently mentioned in general L2 literature during this time was the impact that teachers' perceptions of the teaching environment (curriculum demands, class size, support from staff, etc.) may have on teaching practices (Faltis & Merino,

1991; D. R. Hall & Hewings, 2001; Penfield, 1987). This focus brought on a flurry of small case studies and teaching texts outlining ways that learning environments could be optimised through reflective teaching practices (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). There were also a number of studies uncovering the teacher's voice in areas such as classroom management (Norton, 1998), curriculum (Nunan & Lamb, 1996), and teacher education (Freeman & Richards, 1993). More recently there have increasingly been calls for empirical data on how teachers' perceptions may relate to specific teaching approaches, evidenced in reports (Korthagen &. Kessels, 1999a; Nespor, 1987; Richards, 2001) and in the general L2 literature (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 Calls for a better understanding of L2 teaching and more investigations into teachers' beliefs and knowledge

Teacher Learning Summaries and Reviews		
Year	**Author**	**Title**
2003	*Andrews*	Teacher Language Awareness and the Professional Knowledge Base of the L2 teacher
2002	*Richards*	30/years of TEFL/TESOL: A Personal Reflection
2002	*Berg*	Teachers' Meaning Regarding Educational Practice
2002	*Burgess*	Focus on grammatical form: explicit or implicit?
2002	*Farrell*	Learning to Teach English language during the first year: personal influences and challenges
2001	*Borg M.*	Teachers' beliefs
2000	*Ben-Peretz*	When Teaching Changes, Can Teacher Education Be Far Behind?
2000	*Hargreaves*	The Paradoxical Profession: Teaching at the Turn of the Century.
2000	*Hyde*	Teachers as learners: beyond language learning
2000	*Putnam*	What Do New Views of Knowledge and Thinking Have to Say About Research on Teacher Learning
2000	*Canales Ruiz-Escalante*	A pedagogical Framework for Bilingual Education Teacher Preparation Programs
1999	*Jarvela*	The changes in learning theory and the topicality of the recent research on motivation
1998	*Aalsvoort*	New perspectives in learning and instruction. Report of the EARLI Special Interest Group 'Social Interaction' the organised an Expert Meeting at Leiden University, the
1997	*Saravanan*	Teacher input in Singapore English classrooms
1997	*Ellis*	Teaching and Research: Options in Grammar Teaching
1996	*Fang*	A review of research on teacher beliefs and practices
1994	*Jochums*	Grandfathered ESL teachers development: Assessment of Change and Lessons Learned
1993	*Martyn*	Teachers' attitudes to self-access learning
1991	*Breen*	Understanding the Language Teacher
1989	*Cumming*	Student teachers' conceptions of curriculum: Toward an understanding of language-teacher development
1981	*Altman*	What is Second Language Teaching?
1981	*Politzer*	Effective Language Teaching: Insights from Research
1981	*Tucker*	The Relationship of Second Language Learning to Second Language Teaching

Why this sudden interest in language teachers' perceptions and how their beliefs might influence their practices? One reason is that in other areas (such as mathematics, sciences, and reading comprehension) empirical evidence is accumulating that these beliefs relate to teachers' approaches to teaching which in turn influences learners' approach to learning (Bull & Anstey, 1996; Crawford, Gordon, Nicholas, & Prosser, 1998b). Another might be the urgency expressed by a number of countries with rapidly growing immigration populations (US, Australia, Israel). Many report that teachers of traditionally all-English-content classrooms are ill equipped to deal with needs of the Limited English Proficient (LEP) student. It has been suggested that in order to develop successful professional training programs, it is paramount that we have an understanding of what it is that ESL teachers know and practice (Canales & Ruiz-Escalante, 2000; Constantino, 1994; Geva-May, 1998; Hildago & Huling-Austin, 1993).

Language teaching and research (see Table 2.4) is influenced concurrently by many factors: professional trends (Aalsvoort, 1999) and innovations, technology (Ben-Peretz, 2000; S. Borg, 1998a), academic disciplines (Jäverlä & Niemivirta, 1999), linguistics (Bull & Anstey, 1996), science, learner-based needs (see Table 2.3), etc., with some factors receiving more attention at times than others (Richards, 2001). Richards, in a historical review of language teaching over the last 30 years, suggests that the continual changes and implementation of new methodologies, research approaches, and so on, are perhaps most motivated by dissatisfaction (Richards, 2002). He states, "Despite the resources expended on second and foreign language teaching worldwide, in almost every country results normally do not match expectations, hence the constant pressure to adopt new curriculum, teaching methods, materials, and forms of assessment" (p. 27). Still from developing new models of teaching and learning, to

improving current teacher training, more and more educators and researchers are asking and looking for information on how, why and what does the teacher think? On S. Borg's "Language Teacher Cognition" website,[13] in the "background" section, a list of practical and philosophical reasons for conducting investigations into teachers' beliefs is provided:

- to provide a conceptually more complete account of teaching than a solely behavioural model offers
- to understand teaching by gaining insight into the psychological context of instruction
- to understand discrepancies between theoretical recommendations based on research and classroom practice, and hence to attempt to explain the lack of influence of educational innovation on practice
- to provide quality portraiture of teaching in all its complexity
- to engage teachers in a form of reflective learning, by making them aware of the psychological bases of their classroom practice; to help teachers understand their mental lives, not to dictate practice to them
- to develop a new conceptualisation of teaching which supports and improves the quality of teachers' professional practice
- to provide the basis of effective pre- and in-service teacher education and professional development
- to provide descriptive information about subject-specific teacher cognition and pedagogy
- to understand how teachers develop
- to enable researchers to test empirical theories against the processes of real classrooms

Adopted from S. Borg (2002). Language Teacher Cognition. 2005: website, http://www.education.leeds.ac.uk/~edu-sbo/cognition/index.html

[13] This site originated in 2002-2003; and has developed into an excellent source of current publications and developments on teachers' beliefs and is regularly updated.

From the literature reviewed it seems the field of cognition [14]research a new and growing area of research in the field of language teaching with over a 100 publications in the last five years; but it is also true that much of what has been published is fragmented and lacking frameworks in which to base future investigationS. Borg (2002) confirms this in stating, "Research into language teacher cognition has increased in recent years. Overall, though, this field of research is relatively undeveloped; it is, in my opinion, fragmented and lacking any coherent guiding agenda or framework" (Background section, para. 1).

There are a number of reasons that language research continues to focus on teachers' perceptions as incidental rather than essential to the learning process. Previously I suggested that one reason for this might be a resistance to a focus on the teacher, as this could be viewed as "traditional" or behaviouristic and not in line with current L2 pedagogy which is based on the learner. Others suggest that language lacks a sequence of competencies of the sort that researchers have identified in other subject areas such as mathematics or reading, and that this limitation has prevented the development of a working model that could be readily implemented by educators in the area of language teaching (Kuhn, 1999). This implies language researchers have been delayed in their investigation of factors that influence the learning process because they are still searching for a viable explanation for the language learning process itself.

The bulk of research into L2 teacher conceptions of subject content has focused on grammar and literacy (S. Borg, 2003a). The most extensive review of literature published to date on L2 teachers' beliefs, conducted by S. Borg (2003b), outlines 64

[14] In 1996, Woods used the term "teacher cognition" as a term referring to our general understanding of language teachers' beliefs (Woods, 1996). S. Borg, in a number of papers from 1999-2003, continued to use this term to describe the general body of research into language teachers' thinking, beliefs, perceptions, conceptions, knowledge, transfer of knowledge, constructions, etc. I have also chosen to adopt this broad usage of the term to discuss the field generally withing this thesis (S. Borg, 1999a, 2003a).

studies between 1976 and 2002. S. Borg pointed out that, out of the total located, a majority (47) had appeared since 1996, showing that the subject of L2 teachers' beliefs is a new and developing area of investigation. S. Borg identifies the current trend, stating, "In analysing teacher cognition in language teaching, then, 1990-2000 emerges as a decade of change" (S. Borg, 2003b, p. 83).

The overview of literature conducted for this thesis (see Table 2.5) was done prior to S. Borg's review; however, the results support his stated time frame of the field, as 26 of the 38 studies listed fall within that period. The focus for the "L2 teachers' conceptions of interactions review" was narrowed to studies that included spoken interaction (classroom practice and/or teachers' reflections of both in-class and out-of-class interaction, and their own experiences as teachers and learners as individuals or as a group). I've titled the review "L2 Teachers' conceptions," as the majority (34) of studies have occurred in second language teaching situations. Most of these studies were in English, however; only 4 studies reviewed were in languages other than English. The remaining 4 studies concerned teachers of English as a foreign language; however, the teachers in two of these studies were in ESL contexts themselves as learners. Studies that reported patterns of conceptual development or practices across groups of L2 teachers (preferably including spoken interaction) were also included to inform the general aims of the thesis.

Table 2.5 Literature Review: L2 Teachers' Conceptions (Interactions)

Year	Author	Focus	Context	Year	Author	Focus	Context
2004	Basturkmen	Teachers' Stated Beliefs about Incidental Focus on Form /classroom practice	3 teachers at a private language school in Auckland, New Zealand.	1998	Golombeck	A study of language teachers' personal practical knowledge	2 MA candidates ethnographic
2004	Rocha	Experience of intercultural adaptation of experienced Egyptioan EFL teachers in US professional development program overseas	30 EFL teachers ethnography: the role of interactions and culture shock on behavior attitude and performance	1998	Richards	Relationships between principles and practices of individuals and of a group of teachers	16 ESL teachers in Hong Kong
2003	Srimavin & Darasawang	Teachers' developin self-assessment through journal writing	4 teachers' as learners self-asess their understandings through journaling weekly over 15	1997	Pennington	Comparison of the practices of ESL teachers in the Asia Pacific region	Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, and Singapore
2003	Donaghue	An Instrument to elicit teachers' beliefs and assumptions	RGT 5 groups of 5-8 overseas teachers in UK methods program iand 3 teacher trainers	1997	Howe & Grierson et al.	A comparison of teachers' knowledge and use of content reading strategies	58 primary school teachers surveyed in reading
2002	Hulshof &Verloop	The use of analogies in language teaching: representing the content of	8 experienced teachers , 8 lessons observations and interviews	1996	Baily	The influence of learning experience on teaching philosophies &	7 teachers on an MA course in USA
2001	Borg	Self-perception and practice in teaching grammar	2 teachers (knowledge of grammar and learning in practice)	1996	Baily	Experienced teachers' decisions to depart from their lesson plan	6 experienced teachers intensive American ESL prog.
2001	MacDonald, Badger, et al.	Changing values: what use are theories of language learning and teaching	55 students in teacher training 28 PG and 27 UG	1996	Burns	Teachers' theories and practices in the beginning adult L2 classroom	6 experienced ESL teachers of beginning adult learners in Australia
2001	Breen & Bernard, et al.	Making Sense of Language Teaching: Teachers' Principles and Classroom	18 experienced ESL teachers in Australia	1996	Smith	The relationship between instructional decisions, teachers'	9 experienced ESL teachers in adult education
2001	Breen et al.	Relationships between principles and practices of individuals and of a group of	18 experienced ESL teachers in Australia	1996	Woods	Planning and decision-making in the ESL classroom	8 ESL teachers in 4 university settings in Canada
2001	Richards et al.	Exploring teachers' beliefs and the process of change	Questionaire: 112 L2 teachers (beliefs that guide your practice)	1995	Kern	Relations between Students' and teachers' beliefs about language learning	Questionnaire, 288 students enrolled in 1-2 year French and 12 instructors
2001	Carlsson	Student teachers' conceptions of literary understanding	How 25 Hungarian and 8 Swedish student teachers	1994	Johnson	The emerging beliefs and instructional practices of preservice	4 preservice teachers
2000	Cabaroglu & Roberts	Development in student teachers' pre-existing beliefs during a 1-year PGCE	20/25 student-teachers at the University of Reading fact sheet/ in-depth	1993	Davis	Two Chapter I Teachers' Beliefs about Reading and Practices	2 Primary Level Chapter I reading teachers
2000	Morita	Discourse Socialization Oral Classroom Activities in a TESL Grad program	2 Instructors and 21 students/ participant observation and interviews	1993	Freeman	Renaming Experience/ Reconstructing Practice: developing new understandings of	Longitudinal study of 4 French and Spanish teachers in pre-service program
2000	Johnston & Goettsch	n search of a knowledge base of language teaching	4 experienced teachers taped classes and interviews	1991	Breen	The implicit theories of experienced language teachers	106 language teachers enrolled on MA at British univ.
2000	Archer	Teachers' beliefs about successful teaching and learning in English and math	39 math and English teachers interviewed in Australia	1989	Grossman, Wilson & Shulman	Teachers of substance: subject matter knowledge for teaching	6 case studies of beginning English teachers
2000	Chan	Teacher Education Students' Epistemological Beliefs- A cultural perspective on	385 Teacher education students of the Hong Kong Institute of	1988	Chandler	Unproductive Busywork	Questionnaire to Eng. Dept. Somerset England
2000	De Guerrero & Villamil	Exploring teachers' beliefs athrough metaphore	22 EFL teachers (experienced and in TT) wriiten statement	1988	Horowitz	Pre-existings beliefs of beginning FL students impacted teaching	Bali 80 German 63 French and 88 Spanish
1999	Borg	Teachers' theories/ grammar teaching	5 EFL teachers in Malta	1985	Færch	META Talk in FL Classroom Discourse in Danish secondary schools	6 teachers 7 lessons. ; 3 in German and 4 in English
1998	Richards et al.	Pedagogical reasoning of experienced and less experienced teachers	10 trainee teachers, 10 graduate TESL teachers, and 12 practising teachers in Hong Kong	1981	Elbaz	Teacher's active role in using knowledge professional knowledge and practical knowledge	1 participant a case study 'imagry' and practice

A variety of interaction in various contexts emerged, including: the role of in-class interaction on teachers' planning and decision making processes (Woods, 1996), the role of teacher training and professional terms in teachers' descriptions of their own practices and beliefs (Elbaz, 1981), the use of meta-talk in grammar teaching (Faerch, 1985), the use of analogies in practice (Hulshof & Verloop, 2002), and teachers' experiences of social interactions in their own learning (Morita, 2000; Rocha, 2004). Although spoken interaction was a component of these studies, conceptions of specific interactions inside and outside of the classroom were auxiliary and not the focus of these investigations. No systematic investigation was discovered that dealt with the variations in the ways teachers conceived of specific out-of-class interactions relating to learning or teaching in a specific situation.

2.2.2 The ESL Metaphorical Conceptualisation of Practice Study

At the start of this research, a single metaphorical study was located in the area of second language learning that expressly attempted to better understand language teachers' beliefs about themselves and the learners in the process of teaching and learning language in the classroom. The initial report, published in 2000, presented preliminary results of an ongoing study on ESL teachers' metaphorical conceptualisations of their professions, conducted by De Guerrero and colleagues (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000). According to De Guerrero, an important preliminary finding was that the metaphors suggested that personal preferences and individual attitudes might impact on these conceptualisations. Instead of analysing the data in an attempt to identify the origin of these beliefs, in the initial report teachers' conceptualisations (represented by metaphorical uses) were simply categorised under

the pedagogy of current teaching practices, as we can observe from the descriptions provided from their data.

De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) categorises L2 teachers' beliefs as follows: "Some metaphors express a tendency toward learner-centred rather than teacher-centred instruction ("movie/theatre director"). A preoccupation with teaching critical thinking ("snag in the river"), and an awareness of the difficulties involved in certain ESL situations ("lion tamer"), all indicative of how the teachers' personal experiences have shaped their conception of the ESL teacher" (p. 348). The metaphors then were loosely categorised under various theoretical presuppositions, which again emphasised the need for a conceptual framework developed from detailed descriptions of what it is that teachers actually say rather than what researchers believe they meant.

An evident weakness of the initial findings was that the metaphors were constructed directly in response to the researchers' request to complete a statement ("An ESL teacher is like ..."), rather than elicited spontaneously during discourse, and so may not represent the participants' actual conceptualisations of themselves" (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2002, p. 99). De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) acknowledged this in stating, "We tend to see these metaphors as providing access to prevalent notions about what an ESL teacher is and about the roles ESL teachers are expected to perform" rather than as categories of the actual conceptions of the participants themselves (p. 348).

Without appearing overtly critical, particularly as I very much support the focus of De Guerrero's study, the reason I chose not to use this study as a starting point was primarily that statement. I was interested in exploring the actual conceptions of the participants themselves. In addition, there were two methodological problems evident in De Guerrero's initial report that made it difficult to build on these findings.

The first problem was the lack of information regarding the participants in the study. There was no information regarding the teachers' background experience and education—a limitation which hinders replication and may influence the conceptualisations reported. This information was later provided in a final report of the study "Metaphorical conceptualisations of ESL teaching and learning" (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2002). Data for De Guerrero's study was collected on two occasions in workshops offered by the researchers at a TESOL convention (12 participants) and at a workshop in a MATESOL class (10 participants) at a private university. The group of participants itself was heterogeneous in character, with the two common denominators being that all the participants were currently teaching in ESL contexts in Puerto Rico.

In neither report was there mention of analysis conducted regarding differences in conceptions of the participants that attended the two workshops. De Guerrero reported that 10 of the participants were graduate students; while of the remaining participants, 6 had doctoral degrees, and 6 had master's degrees in TESL and applied linguistics. There was a clear difference in educational backgrounds between both groups. There also appeared to be variation in teaching experience between the two groups that participated: for seven participants, 15 or more years; for six participants, 6-15 years; and for nine participants, 1-5 years. Although the findings reported were not broken down by groups, De Guerrero addresses these variations by asserting that due to small sample size the data did not yield significant patterns of responses according to educational or teaching experiences (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2002, p. 100).

The second problem with De Guerrero's study was that specific detail was lacking regarding the context in which the participants taught or had taught, which was particularly important in the light of former studies which indicate that teachers' concepts of knowing and learning directly relate to the students' level of proficiency

(Archer, 2000; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Prosser et al., 1994). In the second report, it was stated that 12 of the participants were working at the higher education level. While this fact is potentially significant for the purpose of this thesis, unfortunately no information regarding the type of classes taught or the proficiency of the students was provided.

Due to the lack of detail provided on the participants in the initial report, it was not possible to build the thesis on the initial findings published on De Guerrero's study. However, the information presented in subsequent reports regarding the similarities in sample size and, more significantly, the descriptions of metaphorical conceptions under specific conceptions of teachers' roles and general beliefs, provides corroboration and consideration for future investigation of the findings reported here (see Chapter 8).

2.2.3 Developing an Overview of Language Teacher Cognition Research

Although the number of total studies in language teacher cognition appear to be relatively small, the studies themselves are difficult to locate. Therefore, it is possible that some studies that include brief statements or excerpts on in-class or out-of-class interaction may have been missed. The main reasons for this are that L2 research on teachers' conceptions has been based on a variety of theoretical paradigms and frequently grounded in other educational or scientific fields; thus, publications are listed under a confusing array of terms referring to various aspects of teacher's beliefs and knowledge (for an overview of terms see S. Borg, 2003b). Currently the empirical studies published on L2 teacher cognition have covered a variety of factors considered important to L2 teaching and learning, such as; subject knowledge (Grossman, Wilson, & Shulman, 1989), pedagogical knowledge (K. E. Johnson, 1994), epistemological beliefs (Chan, 2000), and practical knowledge (Golombeck, 1998; see Table 2.5).

In reviewing a dominant area in current L2 cognition research, 11 out of 38 sources reviewed appear to be investigations into the relationship between teacher training and L2 teachers' cognition. Table 2.5 includes studies that have looked at conceptual development during teacher training, explorations into the influence of teacher training on pre-existing beliefs, and research into whether teacher training has an impact on actual teaching practices (Carlsson, Fülüp, & Marton, 2001).

There have also been investigations of unique factors that appear to influence teachers' conceptions of specific teaching contexts, such as textbook use (Richards & Mahoney, 1996), or social factors such as differences in culture and language backgrounds (Faerch, 1985; Pennington et al., 1997). This multiplicity of research aims, methodologies, theoretical perspectives and contexts makes it difficult to ascertain from titles, abstracts and reported findings whether the focus of a particular investigation was an exploration of a specific factor or general factors in L2 learning/teaching, or an intention to uncover particular thinking processes behind a specific learning or teaching activity.

In the body of literature discussed here, five general areas of focus in current L2 cognition research emerged (see Table 2.6). These focuses often overlap; that is, a study such as (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000) may be conducted on how teachers understand grammar, but all the subjects will be labelled "experienced teachers" and the questions will ask how the subjects experienced grammar in their own learning and how they perceived their teacher training. Therefore in Table 2.6 I have attempted to list the studies under the focus that was most discussed in each one.

Table 2.6 Areas of Research in L2 Teacher Cognition	
Research focus	Number of studies
• Grammar, literacy and reading	• 8
• Conceptual development or acquired knowledge in teacher training	• 11
• Practical knowledge and practice	• 4
• The influence of experience on practice and pedagogy	• 7
• The influence of unique context or situation on practice (i.e., policy, culture, subject matter, classroom)	• 8

The dominant subject-specific research area in this review appears to be grammar, literacy and reading, as described in S. Borg's (2003b) review, and so it is listed as the first research focus in Table 2.6. In these studies, researchers are at the forefront of L2 teacher cognition, as they have begun to focus on teachers' conception of the role of the subject (S. Borg, 2001b) and how teachers' understandings of the subject and the processes of learning and teaching affect how they practice (S. Borg, 1999c). Similar to mainstream education studies, L2 cognition research focused on subject-specific knowledge consistently emphasises that knowledge is not just the knowing of facts but a process, and that L2 teachers' understanding does or should continually develop (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000).

The second area of research focus in the L2 cognition literature concerns differentiating types of knowledge, such as practical knowledge or professional knowledge (listed as the second and third research focuses in the table), and attempts to identify where that knowledge comes from and how it develops (Grossman, 1989; Hulshof & Verloop, 2002). There also appears to be a growing awareness that different types of knowledge are evident in actual practice (Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver, &

Thwaite, 2001). Twenty-two of the studies reviewed had some mention of type, origin, and development of knowledge.

A fourth and rather new focus in the research situates the participants based on experience. For example, among the studies reviewed in Table 2.5, the majority before 1995 were reporting on the conceptual development of student teachers; however, since 1996 most of the studies situate their findings either with beginning L2 teachers or with experienced L2 teachers. Teachers' experience is beginning to be acknowledged as an important factor not only in how they practice (Golombeck, 1998), but in how they develop expertise (for an overview of the influence of experience in developing teaching expertise, see Tsui, 2003). This conscious inclusion of experience as a factor in current explorations is supported by consistent reports from the L2 teachers that they generally attribute their beliefs or knowledge to personal experiences as learners or teachers rather than to the training they received (Grossman, 1989; K E. Johnson, 1994). A participant in a study conducted by Freeman, for example, claimed, "Everything I liked and learned [about Spanish] was outside the classroom, and [I'm] trying to bring that into the classroom. It's not in the book, and it's to heighten awareness of the outside world and get them excited about it as I was living it, but through the classroom" (Freeman, 1993, p. 488).

The fifth area identified in the teacher cognition research was a methodological one. Studies increasingly report observations of specific teaching practices, and show teachers reflecting on specific situations in their teaching and learning. Breen in his study of 18 experienced ESL teachers argues that teaching pedagogy and practice cannot be explored by simply observing practice or asking the teacher; these need to be done in conjunction. He also argues that to develop our understanding of what it is teachers think and do, the teacher must describe a specific situation rather than a

generally held belief (Breen et al., 2001, p. 498). This development in research has probably occurred from continual reports that what teachers say they believe is not always evident in practice (Graden, 1996; Howe, Grierson, & Richmond, 1997). There appears to be a growing awareness that teachers' plans and decisions and image of what is learned or taught is dynamic or changes when they are in a specific situation (M. M. Davis, Konopak, & Readence, 1993). An excellent study on how teachers' plans and decisions evolve during classroom situations is Wood's work on teachers' decision making (1996). Some studies also report that the context of a specific situation may override a teacher's belief (Andrews, 2003; Howe et al., 1997; Hulshof & Verloop, 2002; Richards & Mahoney, 1996).

One type of reporting that is starting to emerge more consistently in language teacher cognition research relies on excerpts or descriptions from the teachers themselves regarding how the interactions that occur in specific situations impact the ways that teachers make sense of the actual learning and teaching in the particular situation studied (Breen et al., 2001). The Basturkmen et al., study, for example, noted differences in types of interaction and teaching and learning that occurred during unplanned events such as "time-outs," versus planned interactions. (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004). Hulshof outlines one specific difference in teacher interaction, claiming that analogies that the teachers used in that study were pre-planned interaction, and were structurally related to the materials presented; they did not often occur spontaneously (Hulshof & Verloop, 2002). Golembeck's study explores tensions a teacher experiences in practice with error correction, as the teacher wants to avoid "silencing" her students with too much correction as had occurred in her own experiences as a language learner (Golombeck, 1998). Ollin's study, for example,

describes the differences in teachers' use of silence in classroom teaching after reflection on how they use silence in their own everyday lives (Ollin, 2004).

In this review of language teacher cognition literature, I have discussed the newness and incoherency of the field. However, it is also clear that this research area is rapidly developing and growing. Growth is evidenced in the recent emergence of empirical studies over the last decade. Almost half of the studies reviewed here have occurred after I had situated and started the investigations presented in the thesis. With a few exceptions, the studies reviewed have been qualitative in nature and been done with a small number of teachers over a short period; thus most of the investigations have had little or no followup to confirm or refute findings by other researchers. Still, the field of language teacher cognition draws heavily on what has previously been discovered about language learners' conceptions and on the large body of work that has been published on teacher cognition in other areas.

A definition of language teacher cognition is emerging. Currently three general types of knowledge have been identified: professional (knowledge of subject, theoretical knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge), practical (classroom management techniques and knowledge of a situated experience), and personal (knowledge developed through the individual's experiences as a teacher and learner). There is also evidence to suggest that teachers' understandings of language learning and teaching can be a situated in specific experiences and are not always explicitly clear in practice. Furthermore, the contextual factors of a specific teaching situation may override a teacher's stated principles.

What teachers know seems to be heavily influenced by personal experiences. This knowledge, however, may be subconscious and not articulated by the teacher. Asking the teachers themselves about learning and teaching in a specific situation

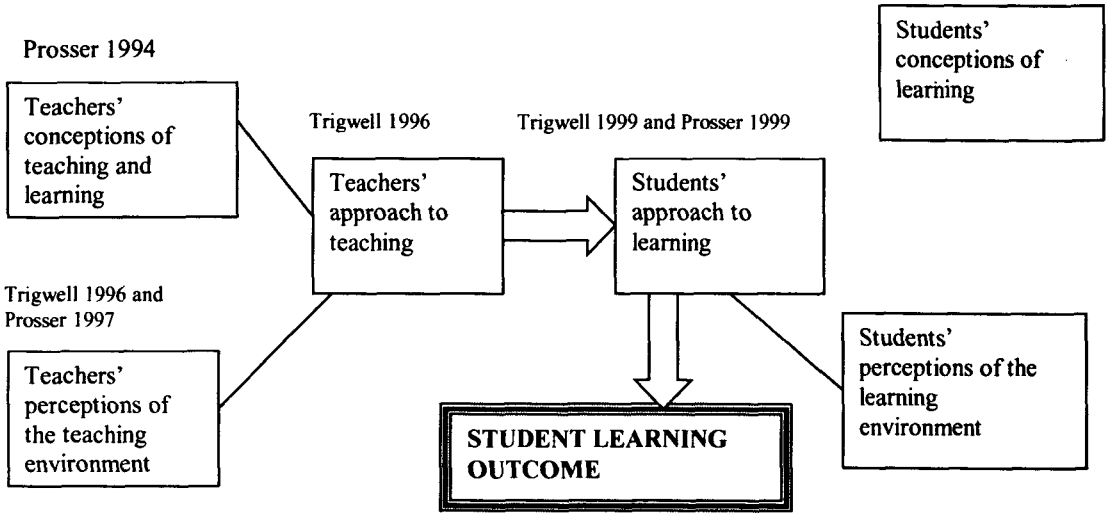
seems to afford the best insights into what it is that teachers think. Thus far, there is not enough research to definitively describe the relationship between what teachers think and do. However, many of the current published studies suggest strong correlations. Finally, there is evidence particularly from studies assessing teacher-training programs that some conceptions held by teachers are resistant to change; though some teachers adopt changes in practice after reflection on particular situations.

Literature on language teacher cognition has also provided a number of insights into what methodologies appear to be most affective in developing and understanding language teacher conceptions. 1) To understand what a person thinks you must ask the person. 2) Quantitative methods may assist in developing an overview of specific subject or pedagogical knowledge held by teachers, but to understand the individual's perspective it is important to ask the individual. Open-ended or reflective questions concerning particular situations are the most effective. 3) The stated beliefs of a teacher may not be evidenced in practice, so the context of a study should either be situated in or informed by actual practice. 4) Teachers' understandings are dynamic, and they change according to specific experience and the contextual factors of particular situations. Therefore, if we are to develop an understanding of the types of conceptions language teachers hold, we need to try to uncover the patterns of conceptual development as they emerge in real situations. While these general methodological insights are helpful, to situate new research on language teaching cognition it is also helpful to look at the more developed strands of research based in other educational fields.

2.2.4 Research Findings on Teacher Perspectives in Other Areas

The impact of teachers' perspectives on the learning process has been widely reported particularly in the areas of medicine, science, mathematics and literacy, where studies have shown that teachers' beliefs affect classroom practices (Altrichter et al., 1993; Ben-Peretz, 2000; Bull & Anstey, 1996; Handal et al., 2001; Putnum & Burko, 2000; Secada et al., 1999; M. Williams & Burden, 1997). To explicate the importance of teachers' perceptions on learning outcomes, I have chosen to review a series of studies that have been conducted on the perceptions of mathematics and science teachers at the tertiary level. I chose these studies for two reasons: 1) the findings clearly detail the impact of teachers' perceptions on learning outcomes in a fashion that is understandable to those not directly involved in those subject areas; 2) the studies were conducted using the phenomenographic approach that I am using with this thesis (outlined in Figure 2.2 below).

Figure 2.2. Review of Prosser and Trigwell studies



Adapted from Trigwell 1999 (p.60)

Prosser and Trigwell began their research using a phenomenographic methodology based on earlier work done on the categorisation of learners' conceptions of learning (for an overview see Marton & Booth, 1997). They began their research with a study designed to develop a range of first-year physics and chemistry teachers' conceptualisations of teaching in learning at two Australian universities (Prosser et al., 1994). After indentifying these conceptions, they compared them to the teaching strategies used by the teachers in their actual practice and found that these beliefs significantly impacted the teachers' approach to teaching (Trigwell, 1996). Trigwell and Prosser then hypothesised that the teachers who had reported beliefs and strategies that were seen to support learners' *deeper* approaches to learning (i.e., teaching viewed as helping students develop conceptions of the subject area) would have higher levels of success in learning outcomes than those who had reported beliefs and strategies that related to more *surface*-level learning (i.e., teaching viewed as transmitting concepts of a syllabus). Therefore, in their final set of studies both a qualitative (based on students' written descriptions of their beliefs and approaches to learning) and a quantitative (statistical analysis of students' course results) comparison of the teachers' beliefs and the students' learning outcomes was conducted (Trigwell et al., 1999). Prosser and Trigwell found that a consistent relationship between teachers' beliefs and learner outcomes existed, which clearly indicates that individual teachers' perceptions influenced their students' approach to learning and impacted the overall result of the learning process (for an overview see Prosser & Trigwell, 1999).

From this example, we can clearly ascertain that teachers' perceptions is a subject of intense research in other areas, particularly those areas that have already developed a range of teacher conceptions that have been found to directly impact learning outcomes. Thus in the area of language research, a thesis focused on a better

understanding of L2 teachers' perceptions, with an aim of developing a basis in which these beliefs can start to be framed, is highly warranted.

2.2.5 Framework of Language Teachers' Perceptions

Currently there exists no developed framework or categorisation of these teachers' perceptions. Studies often report some connection, or relationship between what a teacher has said or the type of teaching skills that are observed in practice, and general conceptions of "good" language teaching practices (Oxford, 1990). In an attempt to build a framework that would explicate the origin of teachers' conceptions of teaching and the bearing these conceptions have on actual practice, Zahorik (1986) classified the general conceptions of teaching into three main categories (see Table 2.7):

Table 2.7 *Relations Between Theories and Teaching Conceptions: A Comparison with Teaching in Second Language Teaching*

Adapted from: Zahorik (1986) *Acquiring Teaching Skills* and Richards (1992) *Theories of Teaching in Language Teaching*

Zahorik's three categories of teaching conceptions and origin	**Richards' Comparison of methods/approaches in language teaching *(theoretical origin)***
1. Science/research conceptions (supported by experimentation and empirical investigation)	Methodologies in language teaching developed as an attempt to apply research: Audiolingualism *(behavioural psychology)*, Task Based Teaching *(L2 research on learning through negotiation)*, and Learner Training *(cognitive style and learner strategies)*
2. Theory/philosophy conceptions (supported by logical argumentation)	Methodologies in language teaching applying a theoretical approach: Communicative Language Teaching *(reaction to critiques of grammar-based approaches)*, the Silent Way *(claims of how adult learners learn)*
3, Art/craft conceptions (each teaching situation is viewed as unique, irreplicable and noncomparable)	There is no specific methodology applied but rather a belief that no one method fits all teaching/learning situations and that teachers should develop a unique set of personal skills and make the decision of what to apply as they think best in a specific situation.

Following Zahorik's publication, Richards (1992) used the three conceptual categorisations as a starting point and included descriptions of teaching approaches and methods from the field of language teaching to illustrate how these different conceptional categories lead to differences in our understanding of what were the essential skills of teaching (p. 39; see Table 2.7). Richards also extended Zahorik's theoretical category to include models in language teaching developed to apply value-based approaches to improve the quality of teaching ("reflective teaching," "the teacher as action researcher," "team-teaching") or the quality of the learning experience (generally termed "humanistic," including approaches such as "community language learning" and "learner-centred curriculum"). Richards claimed that these approaches were based on philosophy: "the values one holds about teachers, learner, classroom and the role of education in society," rather than on educational criteria (p. 42).

One problem with using these categories is that they are too general. In fact, when we look at the variety of teaching practices based on the "Functional," "Simulation," and "Problem Posing" approaches previously discussed (see Literature Review Part A, Communicative Teaching Perspective) it could be argued that each of these three approaches can originate from any or all of the three categories given. The value of these categories was also questioned by Freeman and Richards (1993), who argued that while most widely known language teaching practices may originate from these categories; this does not provide us with information about what actually occurs in the classroom. There is a lot of evidence that teachers' decisions tend not to be based on thoughtful application of a body of professional knowledge acquired in teacher preparation courses, in-service training or post-graduate study (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999b; Nespor, 1987).

The shortcoming of this type of categorisation was also noted by Zahorik (1986), who states, "Beyond a few obvious skills ... identifying universal teaching skills is difficult because teaching skills emerge from one's conception of good teaching" (p. 21). Clearly, frameworks of language teachers' perceptions are needed, particularly as continuing to categorise these perceptions under teaching practices implies that teachers' perceptions originate from either theory or teacher training, when research on the origin of individuals' perceptions continue to report that this is not the case (Crawford et al., 1998a; Duke et al., 1998; Norton, 1998). Even though Zahorik's work has been criticised, it is seminal in that it shows that individual teachers' conceptions are not specific to whatever theory or method is currently in favour; but that these conceptions vary and are influenced by social factors and individual experiences. Zahorik supported the foundation of the questions and findings presented here almost two decades later, by explicitly arguing that teachers' conceptions are an important factor in learning and teaching, and that more exploration was needed to elucidate how these conceptions influence teaching practices.

2.2.6 Where Do Teaching Practices Come From?

Research on teacher learning suggests that the foundations of an individual's ideas about teaching originate from their experience of being a student and teacher (see Lortie, 1975, and Kennedy, 1990, in Freeman & Richards, 1993). Teacher training studies frequently caution against the overgeneralisation of teacher conceptions, and report that individual teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning a language often differ from those that are collectively held by the profession (Archer, 2000; Wallace, 1991). There is also evidence suggesting that professional teacher training courses exert little influence on teachers' beliefs and practices (Airasian & Walsh, 1997; A. L.

Brown, 1997; Über Grosse, 1991). According to Archer, this lack of influence teacher training has on teachers' perceptions might be explained when we consider that "Knowledge is not transmitted and accepted in toto by passive recipients. Rather people construct new knowledge by aligning it with, or fitting it into, their existing beliefs and experiences" (p. 2). Therefore, an investigation that remains open to teachers' descriptions of where their perceptions originate is particularly important, in that it will assist researchers in building an informed understanding of these perceptions, instead of attempting to frame these beliefs under the multitude of theories and conceptions of practice that currently exist.

2.2.7 L2 Teacher Perceptions and the Value Placed on Interactions

After an extensive review of the literature, I found no studies focusing specifically on teachers' perceptions of students' social interactions and language acquisition. Nevertheless, the teachers' role was emphasised in three studies that clearly supported a focus on out-of-class interactions in language learning. Significantly, 1) the teacher's perception of these interactions was seen as salient to the learner and learning process and 2) the teacher's willingness to address these interactions in practice appeared to be instrumental to the success of the learning process. (These studies are discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2, *OCI Studies and L2 Teachers' Roles*).

2.2.8 Teachers' Perceptions of Role

The importance of understanding teachers' *role perceptions* has been exemplified in US studies looking at *why* secondary teachers in all-English classrooms with students of non-English background or limited English proficiency (LEP) have been slow to incorporate language teaching practices in their classrooms (Constantino,

1994; Penfield, 1987). Penfield claims that a major reason for this relates to the secondary teachers' perception that teaching English to LEP students is the responsibility of the ESL teachers. The fact that teachers' perceptions of their role is slow to change is illustrated by Constantino, who points out that despite the fact that US secondary teachers have been aware of the rapidly increasing numbers of LEP students in their classrooms since the mid-eighties, they continue to perceive themselves as "content teachers not as language specialists" (p. 1).

This past research suggests that in addition to understanding teachers' perceptions of in-class and out-of-class interactions in the development process and their origin, we also need to know how teachers perceive their own role in relation to these interactions, particularly if we desire to know why so few studies focusing on out-of-class interactions have been reported in the past. Such knowledge is also required if new teaching methodologies focusing on these out-of-class interactions are to be proposed and accepted by language teachers in the future.

2.3 Conclusion

When we look closely at those aspects of teaching considered influential or significant to overall language acquisition, it becomes apparent that these teaching practices have developed primarily on the basis of theorists' and learners' perceptions of what makes a good learner, teacher and teaching environment (Nunan, 1989; Willing, 1989a; see Figure 2.3). To date language research has been heavily influenced by attempts to explain what makes a good learner. I argue that though this knowledge of the learner has enlightened educators of the language learning process, it does not tell the whole story. As Pica (1987) states, "Even with strong motivation, positive attitudes, or critical needs for learning another language, second language learners have

been known to fall short of their goals in the language classroom" (p. 3). Despite the good intentions of teachers, specialised programming and instructional methods, many will leave the classroom lacking the language skills needed to cope with the communication demands of the world outside (Bunts-Anderson, 2000a). It is apparent that a good understanding of the learner, while beneficial to the learning process, is not enough. The area of language learning is theory-laden with the numerous attempts to explain the process. Yet, we still lack a coherent explanation of how out-of-class interactions relate to the language learning process. It is my belief that to further understand the role of these social interactions in the learning process, we will need to examine the perceptions of the teacher.

Previous second language studies that have focused on out-of-class interactions clearly imply that teachers' perceptions of role influences learning outcomes (Nunan, 1996; Stoneberg, 1995). Nevertheless, these perceptions have been reported as incidental rather than as a direct factor in the result (see Figure 2.3). Therefore, to understand the impact teachers' perceptions have on learning outcomes, we have looked at findings from other areas. What these findings suggest is that research on teachers' perceptions must be seen as an area or focus on its own. Past attempts of researchers to categorise, these perceptions under the headings of prominent L2 teaching practice or theory have not allowed us to progress (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000). Research on teacher training clearly indicates that teachers' perceptions are not heavily influenced by theory, but in fact appear to originate from the teachers' own experiences as a teacher and learner themselves (Airasian & Walsh, 1997; A. L. Brown, 1994). This sort of information can only be collected in one way—we need to talk to teachers themselves.

Figure 2.3. Aspects of teaching considered influential in L2 learning: What L2 teachers should know about the L2 learners.

Type of Information required (*Note: all information required is about learners, not teachers)	*Purpose*
1. Learners' life goals	So that teachers have a basis to determine or predict learners' language goals, communicative networks and social roles
2. Language goals, Communicative networks and social roles	So learners may be placed in a group based on common social roles, and the teacher may make preliminary decisions about course content appropriate to learners' social roles
3. Objective needs, patterns of language use, personal resources	So learners can be grouped according to their needs and/or interests
4. Language proficiency and learning difficulties	So that learners can be grouped according to their language proficiency
5. Subjective needs, including learning strategy preferences, affective needs, learning activity preferences, pace of learning, attitude toward correction	So that teachers may adapt learning activities to learning strategy preferences, individual needs
6. Information about learners' attainment of objectives	So that the teacher can monitor performance and modify program accordingly
7. Information about the developmental processes in second language learning, including learners' communicative strategies	So that teacher can gear language content and materials to learners' stage of development
	Adapted from Nunan and Lamb (1996) The Self-Directed Teacher, Table 8, (p. 26).