

## **Chapter 7**

### **Two Categorical Frameworks for ICI and OCI Context: Similarities, Differences and Relations**

In the preceding three chapters two categorical frameworks that emerged from a study of 28 EAP teachers' conceptions of in-class and out-of-class interaction were presented, and the differences between the experiences reported to be associated with conceptual development were explored. This chapter presents the context of where the ICI and OCI frameworks are situated, along with the similarities, differences and relations implicated between the frameworks.

#### **7.1 Context: ICI and OCI Frameworks**

The ICI and OCI frameworks presented here are not based on previous research; to my knowledge no such work has been published--presenting frameworks of a group of L2 teachers' conceptions of in-class and out-of-class interactions, using phenomenographic methodology to explore how these conceptions emerge in specific situations. These frameworks do, however, build on knowledge that has been published both in L2 research and in research on interactions and teachers' beliefs in other areas. In this chapter a small sampling of processes described in previous research will be presented in an attempt to conceptualise where the ICI and OCI frameworks lie in the current scope of L2 research.

### ***7.1.1 Linguistics Research and ICI***

L2 research into the functions and characteristics of classroom interaction frequently referred to as “classroom discourse” has been researched from a number of pedagogical aspects (see Chapter 4) and has been extensively reported in the literature. One of the most prominent bodies of research into classroom interaction has been done from a linguistic perspective, where there is a general presupposition that talk changes with context; thus linguistic research focuses on types of talk— i.e., teacher talk (TT) and student talk (ST)—and the speech acts or types of utterances that occur in a specific situation (Coulthard, 1977). From a linguistic perspective, classroom discussion (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) is viewed differently from the everyday conversation that occurs outside the classroom (Francis & Hunston, 1992; Stubbs, 1983). One reason for this is that the purpose for each is thought to be inherently different. This difference is described by Consolo (2000): “The main purposes of classroom communication are to instruct and to inform”; whereas OCI, which can also be categorised as different types of talk, “usually aims at informing and interacting for social purposes” (p. 93). Linguistically, research into talk that this thesis refers to generally as ICI and OCI has looked at language from a micro-perspective, trying to uncover the purpose of specific words and utterances (“speech acts”) and from a macro level, where the actual words, types of utterances, pauses, etc. are counted and analysed in an attempt to illustrate what has happened in the interaction in a specific instance and situation.

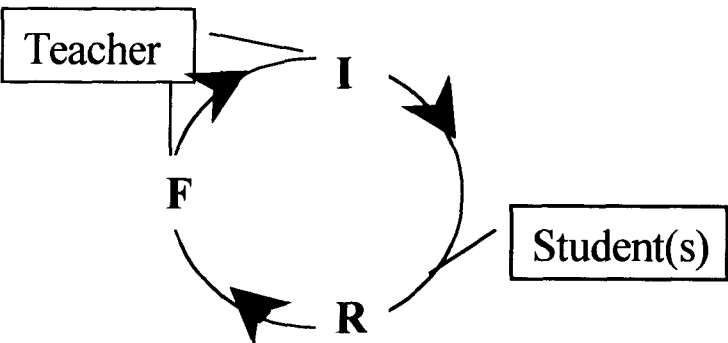
One of the benefits of linguistic-based research is that it allows one to examine patterns of interaction and to pinpoint who is controlling the discourse by measuring such things as the taking of turns, topic introduction, replies, and so on. To put it perhaps too simplistically, linguistic researchers try to better understand the teaching

and learning of a second language by investigating and categorising aspects of interaction and attempting to explain what is communicated and how it is communicated. Literature on classroom studies and linguistics has reported patterns in the social and linguistic aspects of classrooms that allow for some amount of prediction and control in managing ICI (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Cazden, 1988; K. E. Johnson, 1995). These patterns are made known by the way that students and teachers generally interact during lessons, and can contribute to defining a framework of linguistic categories on classroom discussion. Some patterns in classroom interactions have been described linguistically, such as the Initiate, Response, Evaluate/Feedback (IRF) sequence devised in 1975 and slightly revised in 1992 by Sinclair and Coulthard; this is one of the most common linguistic patterns that emerges in classroom discourse:

With each discourse type is associated one or more recurrent structures; the classroom pattern of IRF is one of the clearest (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, p. 133). A diagram of the IRF pattern is presented in Illustration 7.1.

Linguistic patterns have been adopted and used to describe classroom discourse in numerous studies (Atkins, 2001; Boxer & Cortetés-Conde, 2000; Boyd & Maloof, 2000a; Damhuis, 2000; Duff, 2000). For a sample of linguistic research on interactions, see Consolo’s (2000) study; for a framework of linguistic categories used in his study and a description of the IRF sequence that emerged, see Appendix A.1.

*Illustration 7.1.* IRF sequence



The IRF sequence illustrated above describes a linguistic pattern where the teacher initiates discourse (i.e., asks a question, or introduces a topic); the student(s) respond and the response is evaluated by the teacher; the teacher then provides feedback, encourages additional responses from students, or initiates another topic or question, and the cyclical pattern continues.

### ***7.1.2 Action Research and the Influence of L2 Teachers***

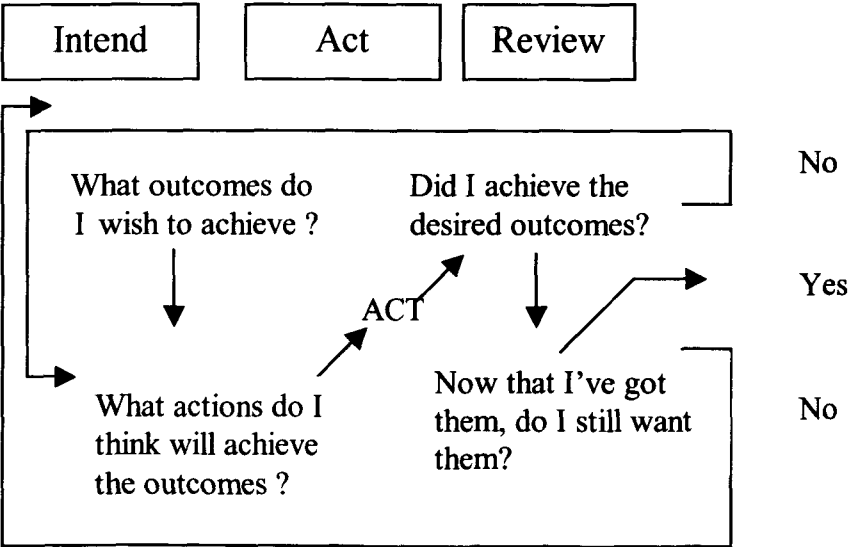
Another area of research that has been influential in developing an understanding of L2 classrooms, and particularly the influence of L2 teachers in the process, is action research. In this type of research, teachers, and often the students themselves, serve as active participants in the process, reflecting on their own learning (Bunts-Anderson, 2000a; Bunts-Anderson, 2000c; Nunan, 1996) and teaching (Martyn & Chan, 1992; McDonough & McDonough, 1997) experiences. Participants identify and clarify problems and questions, and then come up with strategies to overcome problems, implementing those strategies and then monitoring the success of those strategies; they make changes in approaches as needed during the research processes (Burns, 1997; Dick, 1995; Minya-Rowe, 1990; Norton, 1998).

A large proportion of action research has been focused on developing teaching practices, but as the teachers themselves are reflecting, evaluating and implementing changes in their own approach to teaching, findings from this research have provided real insight into individual teacher's conceptions and the relation of these conceptions to practice (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998; Zimmerman, 1998). L2 action research studies frequently report that interactions both in and outside of the classroom appear to influence the development of a sense of community, identity, opportunities for shared knowledge, etc., both in and outside the classroom (Bunts-Anderson, 2000c; Norton,

1998; Toohey, 1998). L2 action research by nature is not meant to be generalisable, as it explores phenomena by providing a detailed description of the processes that occurred, in order to achieve an aim within a tiny segment (one lesson; one classroom; one school; a specific participant).

Researchers often describe the investigative processes of planning, action and review (PAR) of the action research methods as cyclical (spiral), whether the processes are explicitly or implicitly stated; as Dick (1995) states: “At the very least, intention or planning precedes action, and the critique follows” (p. 3). These processes, once described, can be used to develop a working model of that particular situation that can also inform our understanding of the phenomenon as it relates to L2 education as a whole. Illustration 7.2 shows the types of questions, and process of understanding experiences, that occur when an L2 teacher applies action research to implement a change or introduce something new in classroom practices.

*Illustration 7.2. Teachers’ thinking in the PAR action research cycle*



Adapted from Dick (1995) Figure 5 Expanded version of the intend-act-review cycle (p.15)

In Illustration 7.2 Dick elucidates the process of reflection that a teacher and other participants in classroom action research go through in the planning, acting and evaluative stages of action research. Typically these processes reoccur in a circular pattern. Each step is reviewed and action is modified until the participants are satisfied with the outcome or decide that the outcome has been achieved as much as possible. This type of research has been reported to be particularly effective in implementing change or modification of action in classrooms. For a description of a working model developed from action research, see Bonnie Norton's review of two action research studies (1998) and the writer's initial "STLM project" (Section 1.2.1).

### ***7.1.3 Ethnographic Research: L2 Teachers' Beliefs and Interactions***

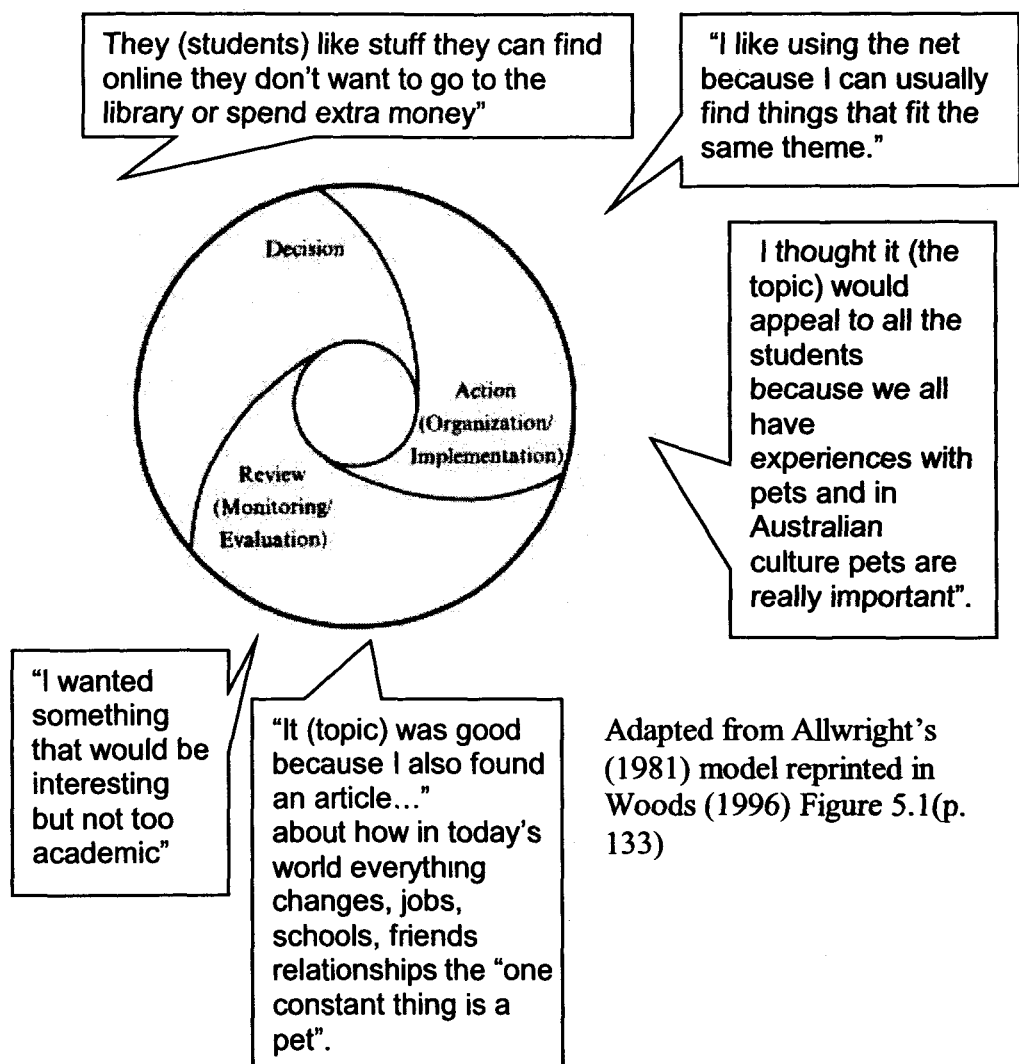
A third area of research that has informed our understanding of teachers' beliefs and interactions is ethnographic-based research. In this type of research the sample size is usually small and the ethnographer typically attempts to engage with the phenomena studied through interpreting the patterns that emerge from the data through the use of multiple data collection processes: interviews, observations, videotaped classrooms, analysing texts, questionnaires, participant diaries, and so on (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In this approach the researcher describes the "world" in which the phenomena studied is situated with extensive use of participants' voices. For example in Ami Tsui's (2003) case studies of "expertise" in ESL teaching, she develops an understanding of how teaching expertise is developed through exploring the teaching practices and ideas of four ESL teachers at different stages in their careers by using a wide mix of ethnographic methodologies to collect data. In Tsui's investigation participants' voices were elicited in different ways through field notes, observations,

classroom recording (audio and visual), formal interviews and informal talks with the teachers. Tsui also interviewed five students of one of the teachers (pp. 72-74).

This type of research is particularly good for describing the processes and changes in thinking that occur in specific contexts from an observer or participant's perspective over a period of time. In Tsui's (2003) case studies the investigation took a year and a half to complete and data was collected over a period of time (one teacher for three months and the other three teachers for one month). The in-depth exploration into participants' lives that action research provides is unique because not only are the participants aware of the investigation, but often they actively participate in the exploration with the researcher.

Consequently the researcher often has opportunities to compare the different ways that the participants react to a similar event or come to different decisions, while "living" in a similar context; examples include Tsui's exploration into understanding expertise and Wood's exploration into understanding L2 teachers' planning processes (Woods, 1996). Illustration 7.3 is an altered version of Allwright's (1981; reprinted in Woods, 1996) overlapping cyclical diagram that explores the decision process of language teachers choosing teaching materials and text books and argues the benefits of using materials that are locally available (Allwright, 1981). In the original version an action research approach is illustrated by describing the *process* of making a decision, and in the altered version the *context* of the decision is illuminated. The ethnographic details provided in the callouts that have been added came from the decision described by one of the EAP teachers when choosing Internet sources for the particular lesson described in the Teachers' Beliefs Investigation.

**Illustration 7.3** Ethnographic details\* of context where decision for teaching material was made described by EAP teacher



\* Excerpts in quotes are literal translations; unquoted statements are excerpts that have been structurally modified to condense a reflective experience into the factors listed by the teacher as influencing a particular decision. This was done to show the variety of factors that were mentioned and was also necessary in maintaining the anonymity of the teacher.

As a method ethnography is very effective in describing factors in the environment that impact decisions in a particular situation. In the illustration above factors such as costs, convenience, students' needs, the teacher's personal interest, and

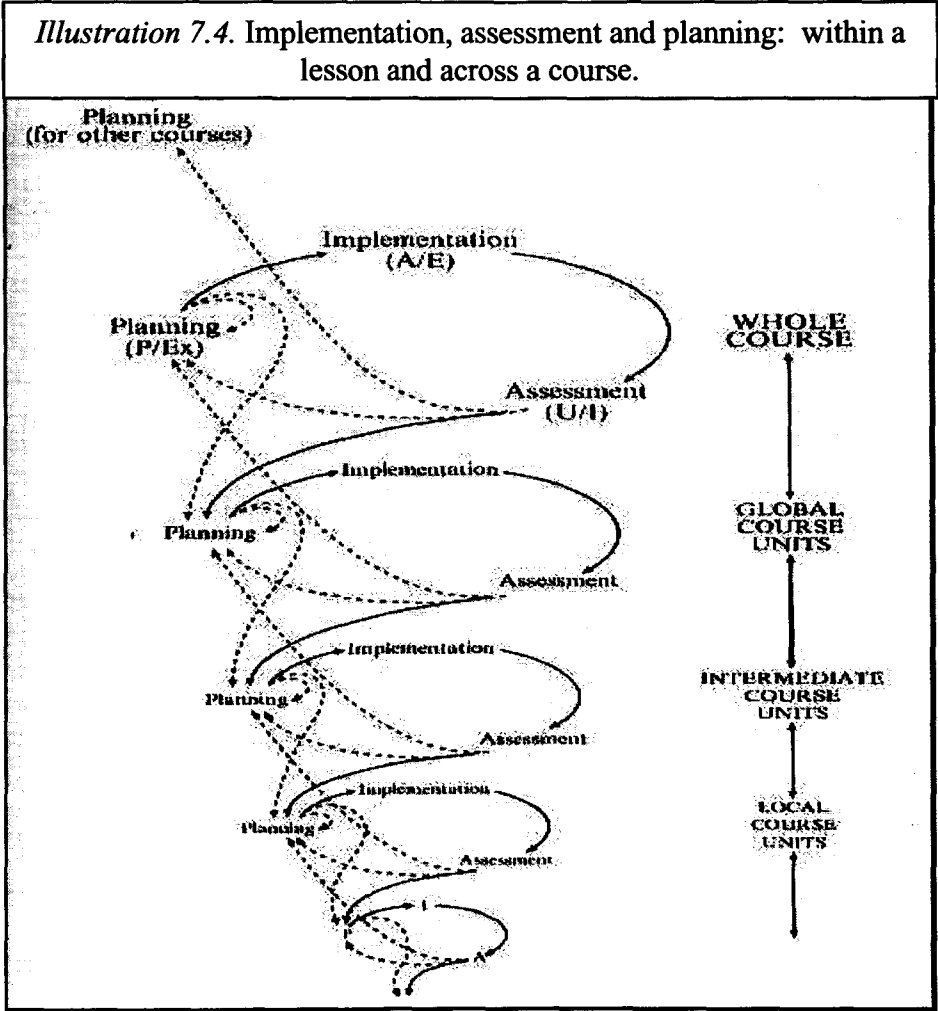


broad appeal of the teaching materials influenced the teacher's decisions to plan and choose specific teaching materials for a particular lesson. The teacher later evaluated the choice of materials and implementation as "good, because the students didn't want to stop talking [about the topic]." This statement describes the students' active participation in discussing the topic as a factor that would influence the teachers' decision in the "Review, Monitor and Evaluation" segment of Allwright's (1981) model, and could in turn affect the teachers' decision to introduce the second article (described in lower bottom callout) related to the topic within the same lesson or with the same group of students.

In the area of L2 teacher cognition, Devon Woods, in his seminal ethnographic case study on the cognitive aspects of eight ESL teachers' planning processes, suggests a different way of looking at teacher thinking and critiques Allwright's circular model in Illustration 7.3 (Woods, 1996). In Woods' assessment a weakness of Allwright's model is that while it depicts the processes of a particular decision that teachers encounter, it does not show how various decisions made in the process are related to one another or how the decisions are related to other factors in the process of planning a lesson within a course. Woods asserts that the model is actually three-dimensional and he proposes an alternative version (see Illustration 7.4).

In this model Woods (1996) describes "Implementation" (I) as referring to actions (A) and the resulting events (E) they become part of; "Assessment" (A) or monitoring is the teachers' understanding (U) and interpretation of events (E) as part of the teaching goals; and the "Planning" (P) and organization of a lesson is directly related to the activation of the teachers' expectations (E) of the teaching and learning processes (p. 134). Woods claims that by tilting the illustration on its side, "We can see a third dimension—the relationship of lower and higher levels of planning and decision

making ... in terms of logical levels”; and these levels form a hierarchy that illustrate a depth of levels of cognitive planning (p. 140).



Adapted from Woods (1996), *Teacher cognition in language teaching*, Figure 5.5 (p. 139).

Although Woods uses the term “cognitive,” his description of the “third dimension” is very similar to what phenomenographic researchers term the “outcome space”—the compilation of categories of description or the different ways, a phenomenon is experienced across a group which (as a rule) form a hierarchy. According to Marton and Booth (1997), this outcome space is formed from distinct

groupings of aspects of phenomena and the relationships between the different ways of experiencing the same phenomenon. This composite of descriptions provides a more complex way of seeing a phenomenon than that which is derived from descriptions of one individual or the researcher's experience, which by nature represents a single experience or way—a partial constitution of the phenomenon (p. 125). Marton states that this more complex way of seeing a phenomenon can also be called “the layers of an individual's experience,” and states, “People as a rule are not consciously aware of layers of experience of earlier date, but we can assume that they are present as tacit components of more advanced ways of experiencing a phenomenon” (p. 125).

In reporting the findings of his ethnographic exploration into the planning and decision processes outlined in Illustration 7.4, Woods (1996) makes the observation that, as the planning, implementation and assessment become more immediate, analysis to separate these features within the framework of the model becomes more difficult (p. 163). An additional finding informative to the thesis presented is Woods' argument that decisions regarding the spoken interactions (level of moves and utterances) were not pre-planned but were “shaped at the point of utterance”; he claims that this type of verbal planning was subconscious, though accessible in later conscious reflection and discussion with the teachers (Woods, 1996, p. 162).

Wood's claim mirrors phenomenographic researchers Prosser and Trigwell's (1999) argument that, although teachers describe multiple factors that influence *how* they conceive of teaching and learning outside the classroom, teachers in a teaching and learning situation form certain perceptions that influence how they approach teaching in that context. Factors that strongly influence teachers' perceptions are at the forefront of teachers' awareness during the situated experience, and can be recalled and

later described by the teachers when consciously reflecting on a particular situation (p. 151).

#### ***7.1.4 Summary of L2 Research Illustrations/Models and Context of ICI and OCI Frameworks***

In the previous section illustrations of processes in various studies and some working models that have come out of these investigations that include spoken interaction and L2 teachers' thinking are described. The ways that the findings are described from these various research approaches are quite different. For example, action research studies typically describe the process of identifying problems with a heavy emphasis on the actions that were implemented in practice to overcome these problems, along with the results. Ethnographic studies typically provide detailed "rich" descriptions of a particular setting or situation, and focus on the thinking and decisions that are made by participants going through a particular process; also the factors that appear to influence the process investigated are usually described in detail.

When comparing and contrasting the illustrations used to describe various processes in the preceding section, the diagrams appear quite similar. They all use cyclical or spiralling patterns to depict processes, despite the differences in actual purpose of the process presented: Illustration 7.1 describes the pattern or movement of ICI within a lesson using linguistic research methods; Illustration 7.2 describes the process of L2 teacher thinking and the actions taken to overcome a problem identified in individual practice; and Illustration 7.4 describes the planning processes in L2 teaching. One reason for the similarities in how processes are perceived by the researchers could be the inclusion of spoken interaction as a factor in all the processes described.

For most of the studies, summarised interaction is conceived as a fluid, non-linear process for exchanging information. In Figure 7.1, ICI and OCI have been depicted in a looping line. In Consolo's study (2000) the dominance of the IRF pattern of the ICI explored is described as controlled by the teachers; the pattern for this interaction is illustrated as a circular process, where the L2 teachers' decisions to proceed in the lesson are determined by responses of the students to a vocal utterance initiated by the teachers. In Dick's model (1995) the processes of change implementation and the researcher's reflection is the focus; in the case of L2 teaching these processes most frequently occur prior to, during, and after a course or a particular lesson. The role of spoken interaction is, however, an implicit constant, as the Intention, Action, and Review stages of the project are continually influenced by the responses, feedback, criticisms, or compliments of the those that are affected by the process (other L2 teachers, students, and so on).

The influence of spoken interactions on the L2 teachers in Wood's ethnographic study (1996) are more explicitly stated in the interviews between the teachers and the researcher, and in conversations between the L2 teachers and other parties that influence the planning of the course in general, but most clearly in Woods' descriptions of the unexpected changes in the teachers' planning processes during the course of interacting with students at the level of a lesson. Perhaps the similarities in the patterns represented is to be expected, as the purpose of spoken interaction—either in the process of L2 teaching and learning or between a researcher and participants—should be an exchange of ideas and information.

The working models of the studies described also share L2 teacher thinking as a factor or a direct focus of the investigation, and a similar pattern of hierarchical development is evident across different research approaches; but that development does

not simply move up in a linear way like the rungs of a ladder. In Woods' study (1996) the hierarchical pattern is described as "tangled" or related to more than one level at a time; and in some instances more than one hierarchy seems to be operating at the same time (p. 110). In Tsui's study (2003) the development of "expertise" is the focus of the investigation; thus hierarchical patterns between the four teachers are illustrated over and over again in the book; but here as well development is described as related but not linear. Tsui uses the terms "multiple and distributed" to describe expertise that is complex in one area and underdeveloped in another (p. 279). Tsui argues that understanding is different for different teachers, yet concepts like expertise are jointly constituted: "The development of teacher knowledge is jointly constituted by the teachers' specific context of work and their interaction with the context" (p. 280).

In Norton's critique of ICI, OCI and not L2 teachers' conceptions are a focus of investigation; however, an argument for L2 teachers to develop a more complex conceptual understanding of identity and community is presented, and a relationship between spoken interaction on identity both inside and outside the classroom is highlighted. Even Dick's model (1995), which focuses on action, describes the L2 teacher as a researcher developing a growing understanding through a process of action, reflection and experience. Second language literature reporting findings from research using the approaches mentioned above (and others mentioned throughout the thesis) has provided a context or knowledge base in which the OCI and ICI frameworks can be contextualised, as seen in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1. Context of ICI and OCI categories of description frameworks.

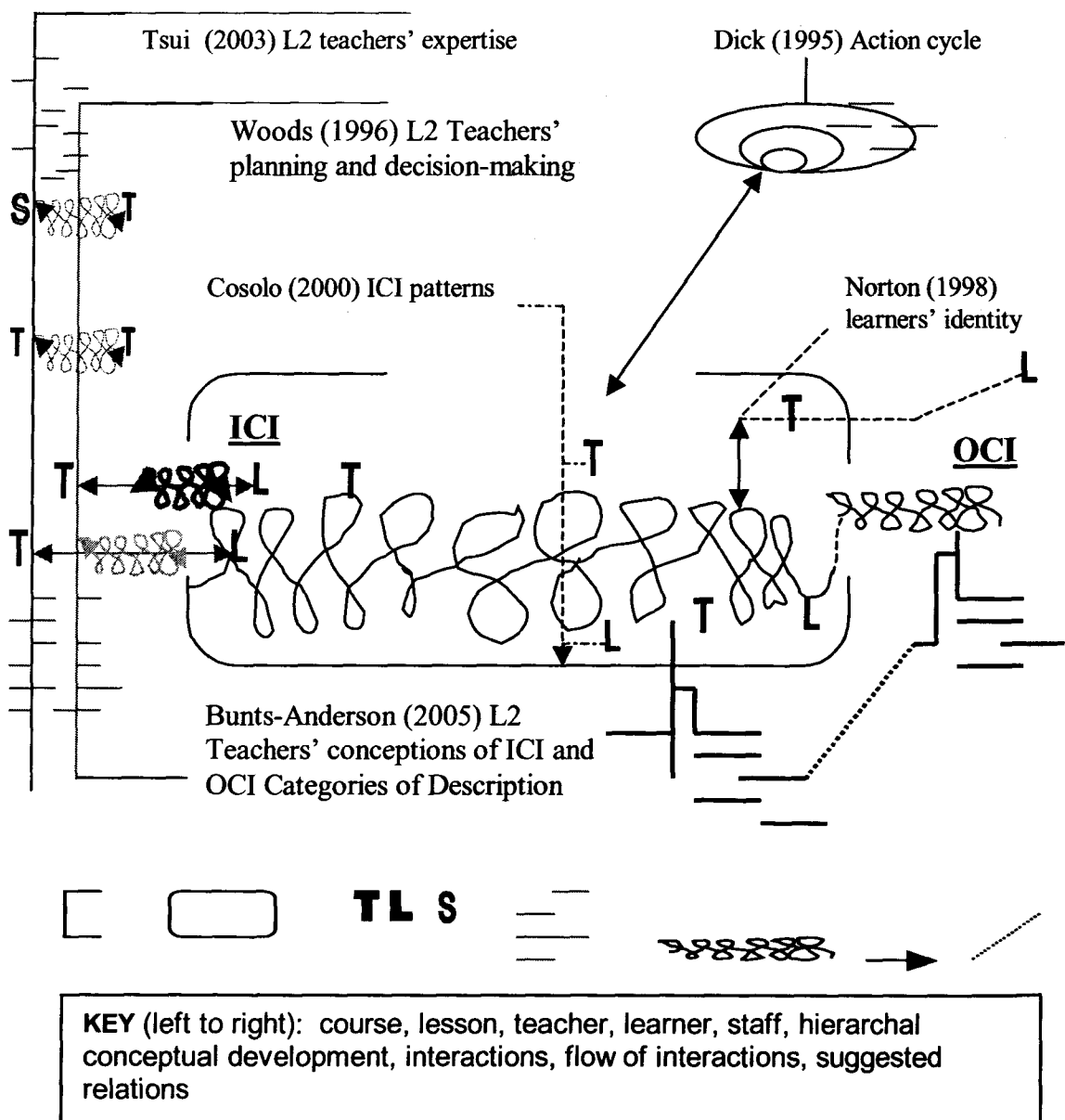


Figure 7.1 highlights the interactions between the teachers and students in the context of a lesson—in Tsui's (2003) and Woods' (1996) studies, across a course; and in Consolo's (2000) and Bunts-Anderson's (2005) studies, within a lesson. Hierarchical development is highlighted across the course in Woods' and Tsui's studies but in a single lesson across a group of teachers in Bunts-Anderson's study. Relations between ICI and OCI are suggested in both Norton's critique and Bunts-Anderson's study, but in the latter, the relations are influenced by L2 teachers' concepts of interactions.

Thus far this chapter has taken a wide-lens perspective attempting to specify generally the context of where the ICI and OCI frameworks fit in the current context of second language research on teachers' beliefs and interactions. In this section the ICI and OCI frameworks themselves will be examined at a micro-level to better understand the similarities and differences that emerged during the investigation, but perhaps more importantly, to explore the connections that are implied between the frameworks.

**7.2 ICI and OCI Frameworks: Similarities**

In comparing the two categorical frameworks that emerged from the ICI and OCI studies, there were a number of notable similarities: 1) For both phenomena distinct conceptions of how interactions were conceived within specific situations were described; 2) In both the ICI and OCI studies, similarities between the conceptual developments of both phenomena appear across the range; 3) Similar relations between conceptual development and teaching practices were reported.

For ICI 5 distinct categories of conceptions emerged that described differences in the ways these interactions were perceived and experienced in teachers' descriptions of actual lessons. Similarly, across the group, four distinct categories of description for OCI were described, again illustrating differences in the ways these interactions were perceived by the teachers as reported in their descriptions of lessons. A brief list of the ICI and OCI categorical descriptions, starting from less developed (A.) to more complex (D. and E.) is illustrated in Table 7.1.



Inside and outside interactions beneficial to L 2 teaching and learning	Table 7.1 <i>Hierarchical Format of ICI and OCI Categories</i>		
	More limited	ICI Categories ⇒ A. ICI teachers' method ⇒ B. ICI teachers' and students' method ⇒ C. ICI teaching method provides opportunities for group problem solving	OCI Categories ⇒ A. OCI are outside of class focus ⇒ B. OCI are outside of class focus except in assigned tasks
	More complex	⇒ D. ICI are the context for individual development ⇒ E. ICI are a forum where what is taught in class is linked to students' real world outside	⇒ C. OCI are outside of class focus but actively encouraged in class ⇒ D. OCI are related to academic structures presented in class

An analogous belief continuously reported across the range of both frameworks was that interaction inside and outside of the classroom were considered beneficial to the L2 learning process. However, when either more limited conceptions of ICI or more limited conceptions of OCI were described during teachers' reports of specific lessons, these interactions were represented as separate phenomena. As the conceptual complexity of both interactions increased there was also a convergence between frameworks in ICI Category D, while in OCI Category C learners' outside interactions were implicitly evident in reports of classroom discourse. In the most complete conceptual categorical descriptions of both frameworks, ICI and OCI were explicitly evident in the lessons reported by the teachers. In Category E of the ICI framework, classroom discourse was described as a "forum" where students could change and build their own conceptions of the subject matter and of individual second language learning (for more on ICI categories see Chapter 4). In Category D of the OCI framework,

learners' outside interactions and experiences were described as related to and supportive of the learning/teaching that occurred in the classroom (for more on OCI categories see Chapter 5).

Both the ICI and OCI categorical frameworks resembled phenomenographic work previously developed in other subject areas (Handal et al., 2001; Marton, 1986; K. A. Patrick, 1998; Prosser et al., 1994), in that the increasing conceptual complexity of both phenomena appears to follow a hierarchical format of conceptual development. For instance there was a common conception evident across the range in both the ICI and the OCI frameworks that both types of spoken interactions are a beneficial and necessary part of the L2 learning process. The amount of detail provided regarding the role these interactions play in the L2 learning process and how they were reported in specific teaching situations appeared to vary in length and depth with the level of conceptual development reported across both frameworks.

When less complete conceptions either of ICI or OCI were reported, the corresponding descriptions often used terms or phrases like "Most ESL teachers think or do ..."; "We (ESL professionals) usually believe ..."; or "I was told/taught (by authorities) that ..."—suggesting that these beliefs are generally held in the field of L2 teaching. In this manner the reasons for the belief described are not perceived as an individual's experience but as a general awareness that that particular perception is accepted as true or correct within the organization and with the authorities in the field in which the teachers work. Dick notes that these generally accepted perceptions are often stated without evidence and calls them "beliefs without reason," defined as "beliefs, which we have been taught to hold without being given adequate reasons" (Dick, 2002, p. 2).

When more complete conceptions of ICI and OCI were reported, the perspective of that particular teacher was described often in terms of how that teacher perceived learning or teaching taking place within the situation of the lesson (see Section 4.6.3, Excerpt 4; Section 5.6.2, Category D, Excerpt 5). When spontaneously describing a personal experience, teachers would use individual terms (“I had this student ...”; “I once taught this class ...”; “From my own learning experiences ...”). In this way reasons for or the origin of the more complete perceptions described were provided by the teacher.

Another similarity between both frameworks appears in the ways teachers reported how they perceived learning in a particular instance described in a situation. In the more developed conceptions of both ICI and OCI, learning was described as the learner’s ability to build and develop and change their own conceptions, whereas in the less developed conceptions of both ICI and OCI, learning was often described as “memorising,” “reproducing” or “providing the correct response.” These descriptions closely align with the “Surface” and “Deep” approaches to learning found in mainstream research on learners’ beliefs and learning (Marton & Booth, 1997; Prosser et al., 1994) and with teaching practices thought to support how learners approach their learning. The range of conceptions across the group, and the hierarchical patterning regarding the group’s conceptions of interactions, are typical of frameworks developed in other areas such as Marton’s conceptions of learners and learning university social sciences (Marton et al., 1993) and Prosser’s conceptions of teachers and teaching university science (Prosser et al., 1994).

Similarities in how teaching specifically was described in both ICI and OCI categories of description emerged when compared to Prosser’s teaching categories of description (see Table 4.5.1, column 2). In Tables 7.2 and 7.3 EAP teachers’

descriptions (TD) were dominant in Categories B and C, which again indicates a general conception across the group that interactions inside or outside the classroom were perceived as beneficial to language learning. However, no description in either range was categorised as “with the intention of changing their (the learners’) conceptions” of interactions, which suggests that interactions were perceived as part of the learning process rather than the focus of a particular teaching activity. The teaching approaches described in both in-class categories (IC C) and the out-of-class categories (OC C) closely aligned with Prosser’s descriptions of a “Teacher-focused, student activity with the intention of transferring information to students” and “Teacher-focused, student activity with the intention of students acquiring concepts of discipline” (Table 4.5.1, rows 3 and 4). This alignment is illustrated in the following excerpts taken from descriptions of ICI teaching (Appendix E.1) and OCI teaching across the group (Appendix E.2):

ICI: “If I can get them talking I think it’s a good practice to compare answers and opinions.”

ICI: “I constantly regroup them for different activities so they won’t use L1 and they can practice their English.”

ICI: “I was trying to get my point across and was uptight with timing, I got them to interact.”

OCI: “They talk to me about assignments and materials not so much about social interaction outside.”

OCI: “I encourage them do things like talk to little old ladies on the bus.”

OCI: “We did some social things outside the class together. They were required to do a survey.”

Table 7.2 <i>EAP Teachers' Descriptions of ICI Teaching:</i> Comparison of ICI Categories (ICI C) to Prosser's Teaching Categories (PTC) Source ( <i>Prosser et al., 1994</i> )									
Total *28 ICI Teaching Descriptions, 25 categorised									
PTC	ICI C	PTC	ICI C	PTC	ICI C	PTC	ICI C	PTC	ICI C
1	A	2	B	3	C	4	D	5	E
7		7		7		4		0	
\ -2 / \ -1 / \ -1 /									
ILR		2		1		1		0	
1 ILR in UN/NC description Total ICI LR = 5									
ICI/OCI Related		0		2		1		0	
Total ICI/OCI Related = 3									
4 transcripts no ICI TD/ *3ICITD=UN/NC/ 4TD>1PMTTC									

In both categories of description, there were instances where interactions were described as the learners' responsibility—OCI learners' responsibility (OLR) and ICI learners' responsibility (ILR). These instances were distributed across the range (see rows 6 and 7 in Table 7.2, and rows 6 and 8 in Table 7.3). In situations where more limited conceptions of interactions were described, the interactions were not defined (excerpt 2), the interactions were sometimes viewed as separate or unrelated to the teaching or learning reported in the lesson (excerpt 1), or an intention was described stating that it is the students responsibility to reproduce information or structures provided by the teacher (excerpts 3 and 4):

1. OLR: "I tell them they have to just try. We don't talk about it."
2. OLR: "I tell them ways they can meet Australians and practice English."

3. ILR: "I see teaching as give and take: it's not just me giving, they have to give back. I handed them back a piece of work within 48 hours; they all rewrote it and handed it back."
4. ILR: "I shift the responsibility onto them."

In situations where more developed conceptions of interactions were described, the teacher either spontaneously provides a personal experience to illustrate conceptions of interaction as the learners' responsibility (excerpt 1), the description included the teacher's reflection of a concept or approach reported (excerpts 2 and 3), or the description of a teaching approach described an intention of building on the students' own conceptions (excerpt 4), as outlined in Prosser's categories of teaching thought to support deeper learning (see Table 4.5.1, row 5) and in the excerpts below:

1. OLR "They're thrown a lot of jargon but not opportunities to use it; they make mistakes outside, I try to help with that."
2. OLR: "I emphasize to them that it comes from all kinds of sources. Be open to everything. The gut feeling is more like if I was learning I would benefit from that. So I give them that, you know."
3. OLR: "We emphasise taking responsibility for own learning. That includes doing things outside class."
4. ILR: "I expect them to bring in their own experiences."

<b>Table 7.3 EAP Teachers' Descriptions of OCI Teaching:</b> <b>Comparison of OCI Categories to Prosser's Teaching Categories</b> <b>Source: (Prosser et al., 1994)</b>									
Total 23 OCI Teaching descriptions provided, 17 categorised*									
PTC	OCI C	PTC	OCI C	PTC	OCI C	PTC	OCI C	PTC	OCI C
1	A	2	B	3	C	4	D	5	E
3		7		5		2		0	
\ -1 / \ -1 / \ -1 /									
OLR	0	1		3		1		0	
ICI/OCI Related		-		2		-		2	
2 descriptions of perceptions that OCI were the LR emerged within descriptions OCI T that were unclear Total= 9									
8 transcripts no OCI TD/ *6 OCITD=UN/NC/ *3TD>1PMTc									

Both categories of TD had instances where more than one of Prosser's categories of teaching were evidenced in a single transcript; teaching was described differently within the course of the same lesson in four transcripts in the IC C, and in three transcripts in the OC C (Tables 7.2 and 7.3, last rows). Both types of interactions were also reported as related in different ways across the group. In some instances OCI were described in a limited way as part of a task assigned during the lesson:

ICI/OCI: "I put them into groups of different ability, different language groups, and they have to choose a topic, and then they have to construct sentences and go out and interview students at university."

ICI/OCI: "I give them tasks as homework (strike up a conversation) then report it back. I don't have time to talk about it much in class."

In other situations the relationship between ICI and OCI was described in a more complex way:

ICI/OCI: The goal for me is try to see that my students are able to go away, know something, and be able to say something and talk about something ... that I hope is relevant to them and their being in the real world."

ICI/OCI: I try to build writing or structure around their own experiences and needs, it's more relevant."

Thus far, similarities across the ICI and OCI categories of description have been explored. General conceptions of the benefits both interactions are believed to play in L2 learning and teaching emerged, as well as similarities emerging simultaneously in both categories regarding general conceptions of the role both phenomena were perceived to play in the classroom. There also appeared to be similarities between the complexity of ICI and OCI conceptions described in both categories of description. The ways that teaching was perceived and the teaching activities were reported in those situations aligned closely with Prosser's hierarchical categorical descriptions of teaching believed to support learners' approaches to learning. There were consistent patterns across the range from limited to more complex ways that experiencing the interactions specifically, and experiencing teaching in situations where interactions took place, were described. Patterns were also evident in the ways learners were described as being responsible for their own L2 learning, that appeared to be hierarchical in form. A similar hierarchical configuration emerged across transcripts when teachers described perceptions of how ICI and OCI were used and approached inside and outside the classroom.

### ***7.2.1 Hierarchical Patterns***

In the ICI study there were similar hierarchical patterns evident in how teachers viewed 1) L1 use, 2) rapport building through ICI, and 3) use of learners' outside experiences in classroom discourse in a specific lesson. In the OCI study there were patterns of hierarchy in 1) the expectation that learners are responsible for OCI, 2)



socialisation processes (learners' development of cultural understanding of the target language community), and 3) how teachers viewed their role and the learners' role in seeking opportunities for OCI (see Tables 7.2.1.A and 7.2.1.B).

In the ICI categories (Table 7.2.1.A, row 1) there was a general perception or awareness described across the group and conceptual categories that L1 use in class could be restrictive to L2 practice and was undesirable if the use of L1 isolated students socially or isolated the teacher from classroom discourse. There was variation in how teachers perceived the learners' use of L1. In situations where more limited conceptions of ICI were described, teachers frequently described students as relying or falling back on L1 too much, whereas in situations where more complete conceptions were described, the teachers perceived the students to be motivated not to use L1 and did not describe L1 use as a disruptive factor in how the teaching and learning was experienced in the lesson.

Table 7.2.1.A ICI and OCI Hierarchy: L1 Use in Class and L2 Use Outside Class		
(Series 1 of 2) Conceptions:		
General	More Limited	More Complete
ICI L1 use in academic Int.- Adv. level classes should be limited Students:	L1 use viewed as obstructing L2 progress limits opportunities to practice in L1  "Some students use too much L1"	L1 use viewed as obstructing L2 progress, as it limits opportunities to practice in L1  "Students are motivated not to use L1"
In teaching practice:	Approaches vary with L1 use: prohibited/restricted/discouraged/allowed (In specific instances)	Approaches vary with L1 use: restricted/discouraged/allowed (In specific instances)
Social L1 use:	Perceived as undesirable, separates learners from different L1 backgrounds, sometimes viewed as rude by teacher and other students.	Perceived as undesirable if it socially separates peers from other L1 backgrounds or disrupts class discussion
Exception(s):	L1 use between peers, to quickly explain a new idea or concept, can be beneficial.	L1 use between peers, to quickly explain a new idea or concept or to share an outside experience, can be beneficial.

In teaching practice, the group as a whole, when describing a situated lesson, displayed variation in how L1 use in the classroom was experienced and approached in teaching. This was consistent across ICI categories. There were, however, quantitative and qualitative differences in how L1 use was perceived and described across the categorical range. When more limited ICI conceptions were described, more instances and additional experiences of disruptive L1 use in the course as a whole or with a particular class were reported. When more developed conceptions were described, instances of L1 use were less frequent, and in those descriptions L1 use was often perceived as a useful tool that peers of the same language background could use in explaining ideas or concepts quickly (see Table 7.2.1.A, row 3).

When describing L2 use outside the classroom across the group, a general perception consistently emerged across OCI categories, that students were ultimately responsible for their own second language learning and for how L2 use was approached outside of class. However, there was a distinct variation between situations where limited and more developed conceptions of OCI were experienced and concurrent teaching approaches were described to support students' L2 use outside the classroom (see teaching practices row 2 and its relationship to course row 4).

There was also variation in the hierarchical patterns of descriptions of benefits of social L2 use (row 3); ranging from general beliefs that L2 use outside of class was beneficial, to descriptions that included reasons why L2 use outside of class was perceived as beneficial, to descriptions of perceptions that L2 use outside of class was viewed as a necessity of academic and language learning.

Table 7.2.1.B <i>ICI and OCI Hierarchy: L1 Use in Class and L2 Use Outside Class</i>		
<b>Series (2 of 2) Conceptions:</b>		
<b>General</b>	<b>More Limited</b>	<b>More Complete</b>
OCI L2 learners are ultimately responsible for seeking outside interaction Students:	Many students are limited in opportunities to interact outside of class.  "Some students are motivated to seek OCI; many are not."	Many students are limited in opportunities to interact outside of class.  "Most students are motivated to seek OCI."
In teaching practice:	Approaches vary, with some teachers providing information upon individual requests, occasionally advising class on OCI opportunities, assigning tasks requiring students to interact, and actively encouraging students to interact in their own time.	Approaches vary, with some teachers providing information upon individual requests, frequently advising class on OCI opportunities, assigning tasks requiring students to interact, and actively encouraging students to interact in their own time and requesting students to share OCI experiences in class discussions.
Social L1 use:	Any opportunity to practice L2 outside of class is beneficial.  Opportunities to interact in academic contexts are particularly helpful in future.	Any opportunity to practice L2 outside of class is beneficial, particularly in situations where students have a need to search for words to communicate.  Opportunities to interact in academic contexts are beneficial.  Opportunities to develop an understanding of the target language country and culture are necessary to future academic success.
Relationship of OCI to course:	Interacting outside of the classroom is not required except in set tasks.	Interacting outside of the classroom is not required; however, students are aware that they will not progress quickly if they don't. Sharing outside experiences is encouraged in class, and classroom discourse is centred on linking academic structures to students' outside world.

### 7.2.2 Summary

In summary, although general conceptual patterns were evident across categories, in those situations where more developed conceptions of either ICI or OCI were reported, there was also a corresponding increase in the detail provided, regarding the role interactions played in the actual teaching and learning that occurred in specific

situations. Detailed explanations of the hierarchical patterns described in the ICI and OCI Hierarchy Tables 7.2.1.A and 7.2.1.B are provided in Section 4.7 and Section 5.6.

7.3 ICI and OCI Frameworks: Differences

The most noticeable differences between the ICI and OCI frameworks has to do with the distinction between the number of categorical descriptions, with five distinct categories of description for ICI (A1-E1) and only four distinct categories of description for OCI (A2-D2), and with the large differences in numbers between transcripts that were categorised as A1 (4) or B1 (12) in the ICI framework and as A2 (12) and B2 (6) in the OCI framework (see Table 7.3.1).

Table 7.3.1 Differences in ICI and OCI Categories of Description: Quantity of Categories and Distribution of Transcripts			
Columns 1 and 3 = Categories of description Columns 2 and 4 = Frequency of distribution of transcripts across categories			
ICI CAT	Freq ICI	OCI CAT	Freq OCI
A1	4	A2	12
B1	12	B2	6
C1	6	C2	7
D1	3	D2	3
E1	3		

There are a number of possible reasons for the difference in number between the descriptive categories listed in the ICI and OCI frameworks. The conceptions that were described emerged naturally from the experiences of teaching in a specific situation as reported by the 28 teachers, so ICI were described as part of the process of

many L2 teaching methodologies. However, OCI are not as explicitly defined in many methodologies, so experiences with OCI could be, as the data suggests, more limited than with ICI. Neither ICI or OCI are considered to be a specific subject in the field of L2 teaching; therefore, highly developed conceptions of these phenomena might look different from frameworks developed in other areas of education, where the phenomenon studied is often a subject or particular concept of a subject that is well known by the teachers and the researchers, such as conceptions of mathematics (Crawford et al., 1998a; Handal et al., 2001) and science (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, 1999b; Pang & Marton, 2003; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996). Another reason might be the number of participants in the study. While 28 teachers is rather a large sample for a phenomenographic research study, it is rather a small sample on which to base a framework that can be generalisable to widely similar contexts; therefore if opportunities to experience OCI are limited, it is possible that with an increase in number of participants, variances in ways that OCI are perceived at the highest level may become clearer and another category could emerge.

There was also a difference in numbers of individual transcripts describing less developed conceptions between both frameworks. In the OCI categories of description the largest number of transcripts (12) best fit into category A, where “OCI were conceived as separate and distinct from in-class teaching.” In contrast, in the OCI categories the largest number of transcripts (12) best fit into category B, where “ICI were conceived as a teaching method that provided opportunities for learners to receive feedback from teacher and peers” (see Table 7.3.1, categories A1 and A2, row 1). The difference in frequency between the transcripts categorised as ICI category A1 and B1 might be influenced by the application of prominent L2 teaching methodologies in

classroom discourse. For example, in Chapter 6 the prevalence of communicative teaching approaches was clearly outlined (see Table 6.3.2).

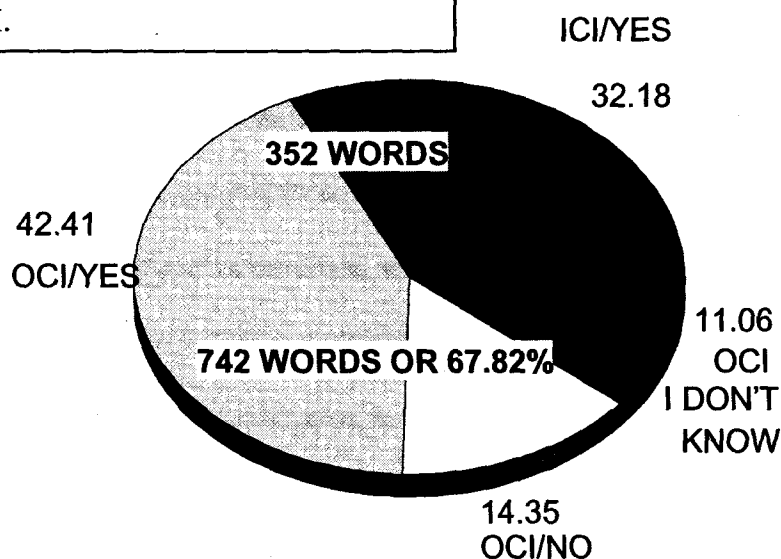
During the process of categorising transcripts, a distinction was made between categories A1 and A2, primarily based on the differences between how the interactions were reported to be approached in a lesson (teacher-directed interaction vs. interactions between peers) rather than how they were conceived in relation to the teaching and learning in that situation. No such distinction would be available for the OCI framework; however, the difference in conceptual development between categories should be considered carefully. It is also possible that the conceptions of ICI and conceptions of OCI, although sharing some similarities, are actually stable and generalisable as is, and that the variances and differences reported are actually elements of phenomena that may be related but are uniquely different; thus the perceptions reported and the conceptions that emerge may inform our understanding of the other phenomena, but the frameworks themselves are not directly comparable.

### ***7.3.1 Differences in Teachers' Conceptions of Student Ability to Interact Inside and Outside the Classroom***

A greater emphasis given to those interactions that occur in the formal context of the classroom than those that occur informally outside of the classroom was highlighted in the L2 literature on interactions (summarised in the introduction sections of Chapters 4 and 5). Differences in how the Australian EAP teachers reported their perceptions of these interactions in the ICI and OCI studies do not constitute an unexpected finding. Such a difference was noted early on in the interviews when, in response to the researcher's questions regarding individual teacher's perceptions of whether their L2 students had the ability to interact inside the classroom, all 28 teachers

responded, “Yes”; however, when asked if their students had the ability to interact outside the classroom there were multiple responses, 15, “Yes” responses; 9, “No” responses; and 8 responded with, “I don’t know” responses. All 28 teachers claimed that the students in the lessons they reported had similar (upper intermediate to advanced) levels of proficiency in the second language; so the difference in perceptions reported by the teachers was not specifically influenced by varying levels of ability amongst the students. The length of responses provided for this question posed for both phenomena also differed significantly, with the teachers using more than twice as many words to describe students’ ability to interact outside of the classroom than they used to describe students’ ability to interact inside (see Chart 7.1).

**Chart 7.1. Differences in words used to describe students' ability ICI and OCI.**



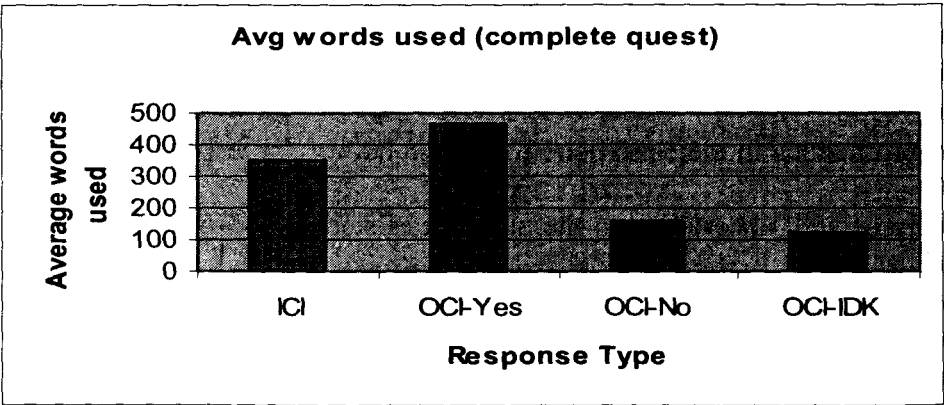
In response to the question, teachers used a total of 352 words. An average of 12 words, across the 28 teachers interviewed, were used to affirm the students' ability to interact in the classroom and a total of 742 words (an average of 26.5 words per teacher) were used to affirm the students' ability to interact outside the classroom. There did not appear to be statistical relevance in the quantitative difference in total words the teachers used to describe student ability to interact inside or outside the classroom (see statistics report, Appendix E.3), but the perceptions described appeared to be qualitatively very different. That is, while there appeared to be unanimous certainty that students had the ability to interact at an immediate to advanced level of English proficiency in the classroom, more than half of the respondents (17) responded negatively or with uncertainty to the question of student ability to interact outside the classroom. Consequently, the researcher decided to further explore the responses provided for both phenomena in an attempt to better understand this difference in perception through ascertaining the degree of certainty reported.



7.3.1.1 EAP teachers’ descriptions of ICI student ability

In analysing the differences in data that emerged in teachers’ descriptions of ICI and OCI, a comparison of the words used to describe student ability to interact in the classroom was done, with each of the three responses provided for OCI (Yes, No, I don’t know). A difference in words used for each response across the group emerged, with the average words used to complete the question for ICI (352), OCI-Yes (464), OCI-No (157) and OCI-I don’t know (121); see Appendix E.4. Again there did not appear to be statistical relevance in the quantity of words used across the group of teachers’ responses, even in comparing the different types of responses. However, there appeared to be some significance in that the largest number of words used in response to the questions regarding student ability was evident in the “Yes” response for both phenomena (see Table 7.3.2). Therefore the words and meanings for teachers’ affirmative responses to the question of students’ ability to interact inside and outside of class where further analysed in individual transcripts and then again across the group as a whole.

Table 7.3.2 *Comparison of Words with Response Type: Student Ability*



In the “Yes” responses regarding student ability to interact in class, there appeared to be little variance in the perceptions described. The responses were analysed for the amount of certainty described in the teachers’ perceptions of student ability. In some cases teachers had responded “yes,” followed by an example of student ability; in other cases teachers had responded “yes” and had discussed reasons for the perception described (e.g., “All students are tested prior to entering the class”); and in the remaining cases teachers had simply replied “yes” without explicitly stating a reason for the perception. In those transcripts where the examples of student ability or reasons for the “yes” responses were explicitly stated, the “yes” response was categorised as certain (C). In those transcripts where ability was implied but not explicitly discussed elsewhere in the transcript, the responses were categorised as implied (I). The words used to express certainty of student ability to interact were counted in each transcript and compared with the level of certainty explicitly described in the transcripts.

Again, the quantitative difference in words used did not seem to have any statistical relevance, nor did it illuminate any differences between how student ability was described and how it was experienced in actual lessons by the teachers (see Appendix E.4). There were differences in the ways that the teachers described their perceptions of students’ ability to interact inside the classrooms:

1. “Yes, they are pretty fluent.”
2. “Yes, they are able to speak at a reasonable level in class but they have problems with using some of the academic terms they’ve learnt.”
3. “They have the ability to interact confidently within situations they are familiar (comfortable contexts), but some of them are limited when discussing topics they don’t have prior experience with.”

In all transcripts, examples of students interacting in class and participating in in-class discussions were provided; therefore the difference in length of “yes” responses for student ability to interact in the class, and the level of individual certainty

expressed in each transcript, did not suggest that there were any significant differences across the group of teachers regarding how student ability to interact in class was perceived; nor was there any mention by the teachers that any of the students that participated in the lesson described had greater or less proficiency than was initially described by the teachers. In other words, all 28 teachers' perceptions of students ability to interact in class at an intermediate to advanced level of proficiency was later substantiated in examples of students interacting at the level of proficiency expected by the teachers in in-class activities.

### **7.3.1.2 EAP teachers' descriptions of OCI student ability**

There were differences in the quantity of words used to describe students' ability to interact outside of class in EAP teachers' responses (see Table 7.3.2). Similar to the previous comparisons with descriptions of ICI student ability, there did not seem to be any quantitative correlation between the amount of words used and the perceptions described by the teachers regarding student ability to interact outside the classroom. The types of "yes" responses used by the teachers to describe student ability to interact outside the classroom were qualitatively different from those that had been used to describe students' ability to interact inside the classroom. Across the group there was less certainty expressed in perceptions of students' OCI ability than there had been in the descriptions of students' ICI ability:

1. "They should be able to ... but I don't know if they are."
2. "Yes, they have the ability but I don't know if all of them interact outside the classroom. ... I imagine that it must be hard for some of them to meet people ... I guess I don't really know if they do or not."
3. "No, I don't think they do because they were so frightened to do the survey (assigned task outside of the classroom) and then surprised that they could do it."

4. "Yes, they have the ability to communicate very communicatively and they are quite a motivated lot."

Unlike the descriptions of students' interacting during lessons (ICI) that appeared in all 28 transcripts, very few descriptions of students' ability to interact outside of the classroom were evident across the group. In those cases where students' ability to interact outside of the classroom were explicitly described, it was often connected to a perception the teacher had developed through experiences that were not related to the lesson they were describing:

5. "Depends what they wanted to achieve, you know."
6. "Simple stuff, yes, but on an academic level they are very low."
7. "Well, the ones that made friends with each other who are not of the same L1 background did, I mean they do use English outside of class. I've met them at the X [name of location at university] for example, and they were chatting in English. The X [name of nationality] girl and the Y [name of nationality] girl have become really close."
8. "It depends on the student; I mean, we often chat about ways of exposing themselves to English outside of the classroom ... but I haven't seen any sort of clear evidence ... my feeling is yes."
9. "No they have none—I would say almost none of them, even the most advanced students, have the ability to speak in everyday language."
10. "Yes, they have the ability to conduct the surveys and interviews we have as part of the course. ... I don't know about socially, we don't talk about that."

There also seemed to be variation in the types of perceptions that were described by the teachers in their initial "Yes", "No" or "I don't know" responses to questions regarding students' ability to interact outside class. For example, some respondents replied emphatically "yes" to questions of student ability to interact inside and outside of the classroom, at the start of the interview; but later on, they described uncertainty or no knowledge of whether students had opportunities to interact, or did

interact, outside of the class (see excerpts 1, 2 and 7 above). Other respondents replied “no” or “limited” to the question of whether students had the ability to interact outside of the classroom, but later provided descriptions of individual student’s problems interacting outside of class, or they related experiences of classroom discussions based on students’ outside interactions. Teachers’ awareness of students’ ability to interact outside of class appeared to be more closely related to descriptions of experiences with these interactions, than to their initial “yes”, “no”, or “I don’t know” question responses.

To discover if any patterns emerged between the awareness of OCI described across the group and the responses provided to questions of student ability, the transcripts were reanalysed. First, the transcripts were further explored for any additional comments individual teachers had made that supported or refuted the response provided to the question posed by the researcher regarding student ability (Question 1). Those transcripts, which contained only the initial response, were labelled “unsubstantiated,” and those that contained additional comments describing individual responses were marked “substantiated” (Appendix E.5, column 2). Next, responses to the question, “Did the students’ interact outside the classroom” (Question 2) were listed (see Appendix E.6). Transcripts that contained only the initial response were labelled as unsubstantiated, and those that contained additional comments and descriptions of teachers’ experiences with the students’ out-of-class interactions were marked as substantiated. In some instances, teachers described uncertainly regarding particular students, or a particular context, or the students as a group; these responses were labelled as uncertain. Responses to both questions were then contrasted and compared with the individual numbered codes for each transcript (see Appendix E.5, column 6).

There was a difference in numbers of responses provided to the question of student ability to interact. For ICI there were 28 responses, or one response per participant. For OCI there were 36 provided across the group (eight teachers provided more than one response to question 1). The variation of certainty regarding students' ability to interact outside of the classroom demonstrated in the previous excerpts (1-10) was further illuminated in a comparison of the responses to Question 1 with the responses to Question 2 provided by the same respondents (Table 7.4).

Table 7.4 <i>Comparison of Multiple Responses: Questions 1 and 2</i>				
Transcript Number	Question 1: Do students have the ability to interact outside of class?		Question 2: Do students interact outside of the classroom?	
8	Yes	Sub	Yes	Substantiated
	Yes	Sub	No	Substantiated
9	Yes	Sub	Yes	Substantiated
	Yes	Sub	I don't know	Uncertainty
13	Yes	Sub	No	Substantiated
	Yes	Sub	Yes	Substantiated
17	Yes	Unsub	Yes	Assigned tasks
	No	Unsub	Uncertainty	Social interactions
20	Yes	Unsub	I don't know	Uncertainty
	No	Unsub	I don't know	Uncertainty
21	Yes	Sub	Yes	Assigned tasks
	Yes	Sub	Uncertainty	Social interactions
27	Yes	Sub	Yes	Substantiated
	No	Sub	Yes	Substantiated
28	Yes	Sub	I don't know	Uncertainty
	No	Sub	I don't know	Uncertainty

In transcripts 8 and 13, for example, a perception that students had the ability to interact outside of class was described, yet experiences describing both students' ability and inability to interact outside the classroom were provided. In transcript 27, the reverse pattern of responses occurred. In transcript 9, the respondent indicated that students had the ability to interact outside of class and described an experience that

supported this perception; however, the respondent also described a lack of experience and an uncertainty of students' ability in specific contexts outside of class. Similarly in transcripts 17 and 21, the respondents described students as having the ability to interact in tasks that were assigned outside the classroom, but also described a lack of experience and an uncertainty of students' ability to interact "socially" outside the context of the class. In transcripts 20 and 21 both respondents described a perception that the students had the ability to interact outside the classroom, but both also explicitly described limited or no experiences with students' OCI in the lesson and the course within which the lesson was situated. The wide variation between the eight teachers' perceptions of student ability and the actual experiences of students' OCI described in Table 7.4 were also evident in the descriptions and experiences described in the transcripts where a single response to questions 1 and 2 had been provided (see Appendix E.7) or in situations where teachers' perceptions of student ability to interact emerged elsewhere in the transcripts.

I: Do they have the ability to communicate outside of the classroom?

P1: They should be able to, yes. Should be able to. Some of my preppies might have a bit more problem. They have some problems with pronunciation; a lot of them have confidence problems ...

I: With the language or just in general?

P1: I think it's with English, especially listening and speaking. The feeling that they don't understand, which means that they slack off. They don't understand. Hopefully one of them that I've worked with ... he had a very big problem. I was hoping to get him to ... actually his confidence has improved; we're in the 8<sup>th</sup> week so we still have two and a half weeks to go.

I: Do they have the ability to interact outside of the classroom?

P 2: Yes, in class.

P2: It's not often brought up in class. In one-to-one conversations, yes; however, I doubt the ability of two or three of them to communicate outside familiar topics such as family and study. We often find that the students live very socially isolated lives.

P3: At home [in their own countries] they are seen as good English students; however, the level of their English is nowhere near good enough here; they don't like that. Often their motivation is not high. ... They gravitate to living with language compatriots [people who share same L1]; that isn't a good thing—they aren't speaking our language [English].

To develop a better understanding of the differences in students' OCI ability and the specific experiences that were described, responses to both questions were contrasted with the labels "substantiated" or "unsubstantiated." To assist in determining whether the description provided was an individual awareness of students' OCI within a situated context, or a general perception held across the group, codes (I-V) for five patterns that emerged were provided by the researcher. Numerically smaller ratings were given to those situations which described a greater awareness of students' OCI experiences and opportunities within the situated lesson, and numerically larger ratings were given to those situations where limited awareness of students' OCI experiences and opportunities were described by the teachers themselves (see Table 7.5).

**Table 7.5** *Five Patterns of L2 Students' OCI Ability Described and Teachers' Experiences of Students' OCI Described: Awareness in Situated Lessons*

Pattern	EAP Teachers' description of students' OCI ability	Awareness of students' OCI experiences and opportunities described	Rating of Awareness
I	Yes or No, or both = Substantiated	Yes or no, or both = substantiated	1
II	Yes or No or both = Unsubstantiated	Yes or no, or both = substantiated	2
III	Yes, or No or both = Unsubstantiated	1 or more types of experience = substantiated but uncertainty described in specific OCI contexts	3
IV	Yes, or No or both = substantiated or unsubstantiated	No type of experience substantiated	4
V	Yes, or No or both = substantiated or unsubstantiated	Limited or no experience and uncertainty of students' opportunity described	5

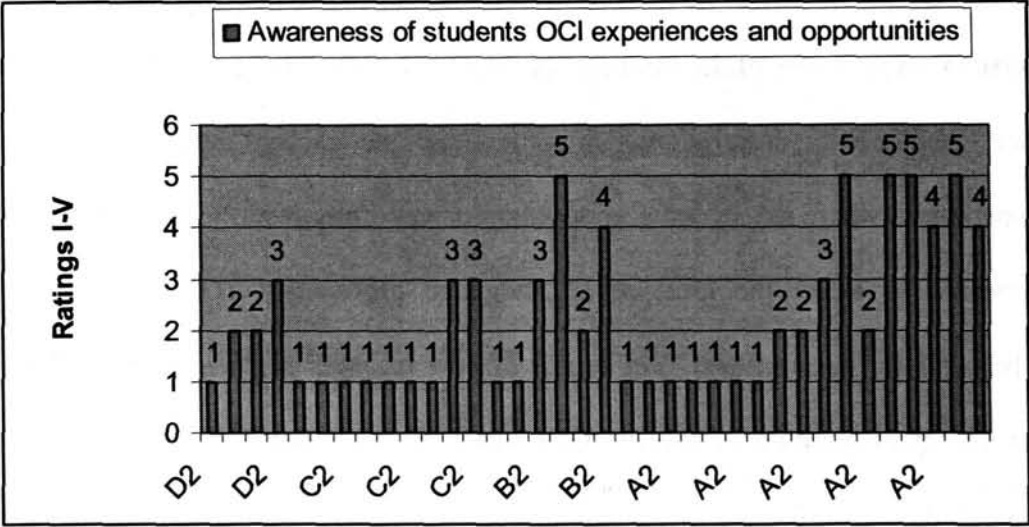


The ratings provided do not indicate a measurement of awareness of individual teachers or a difference in awareness between Patterns (I-III). In one transcript, for example, an awareness of students' ability to interact could be illustrated by one or more experiences all labelled as Pattern I. It could be argued that teachers with greater awareness and limited awareness of students' OCI experiences and opportunities would be likely to describe contexts of uncertainty (Pattern III). It is also possible that a teacher might have a very developed awareness of students' OCI abilities and opportunities, but within the lesson described this awareness or substantiating experiences simply did not emerge. Nevertheless, in analysing the teachers' awareness of students' OCI and opportunities that did emerge in descriptions of situated lessons, the researcher believes that it is reasonable to argue that there is a distinction between the first three patterns and the last two. In Patterns I-III some awareness is indicated; however, in Patterns IV and V, either no experiences were provided or the teachers themselves described them as limited and uncertain.

Once the patterns between the 28 teachers' descriptions of student ability and the experiences described emerged and were identified, the patterns evident within each transcript were rated with the type of description provided of substantiation and limits to awareness of students' OCI (see Appendix E.7, column 3). Ratings of patterns were then compared with the OCI category of description most prominent within each transcript across the group. Because of the difference in number of teachers within each OCI category of description, a statistical analysis was not possible. However, a general pattern between conceptual development of OCI and awareness of students' OCI experiences and opportunities did emerge. In transcripts where more developed categorical descriptions of OCI were most prominent, the average number for ratings

was lower (Category D = 2 and Category C = 1.4), indicating that those teachers described a greater awareness of students' OCI ability and experiences than in transcripts where more limited categorical descriptions were most prominent (Category B = 2.7 and Category A = 2.5) and the ratings were higher, indicating less awareness (see Chart 7.2 and Appendix E.5).

Chart 7.2. Comparison of OCI categories of description and awareness in situated lesson.



A visual comparison of the four OCI categories of description, with the five ratings given to the patterns of responses and experiences in teachers' descriptions of students' OCI ability and the teacher's awareness within a situated lesson, illustrates a difference in awareness of students' OCI experiences and opportunities across categories of description. When contrasting OCI categories D and C with categories B and A, in the former, patterns I-III continually emerged, but in the latter categories, greater variation and distribution of the patterns I-V was found. Across the group, the nine situations where either no experiences of student OCI were described, or teachers explicitly stated limited awareness and uncertainty of students' OCI, all emerged in transcripts where more limited conceptions of OCI were prominent (Chart 7.2). In no

instance did Patterns IV or V (labelled 4-5 in chart) emerge in a transcript previously categorised with more complete conceptions of OCI.

### ***7.3.2 Differences in Teaching and Learning: ICI and OCI Categories of Description***

One significant difference between the ICI and OCI categories of description was in the ways the 28 EAP teachers described how they perceived *student learning* in particular situations and how they described their intentions of learning (“Object of Learning”). In situations where the teachers’ conceptions of OCI were described, personal experiences of the teachers’ personal learning experiences frequently emerged (see Chapter 6 for descriptions); in some situations teachers described prior teaching experiences where the students’ motivation or opportunities to interact outside of class appeared to affect the level of L2 language proficiency a student achieved (see Chapter 4 for descriptions). Yet details of how teachers perceived student learning or the object of learning in specific OCI situations were not explicated. There was not enough data available across the group or even within a significant sample of the group to further explore or analyse EAP teachers’ perceptions of student learning or of the object of learning in OCI situations. This data did emerge, however, in situations where ICI were described in significant detail and quantity to provide opportunities to contrast these descriptions with categories of description of student learning and object of learning published in other areas.

#### **7.3.2.1 EAP teachers’ perceptions of student learning and object of learning in descriptions of ICI experiences**

Similar to the data that emerged across both categories of description in regards to teaching, the range of perceptions of student learning and object of learning in

situations where ICI were described across the group was typical of frameworks developed in other areas (see Table 4.5.1, column 1). Therefore the data that emerged in the ICI study on teachers’ conceptions of student learning and object of learning was compared to Marton’s well known conceptions of “Surface” and “Deep” conceptions of learning social sciences (Marton et al., 1993) in Table 7.6 (Appendix E.8).

Table 7.6 <i>EAP Teachers’ Descriptions of Student Learning: ICI</i>									
Comparison of ICI categories to Marton’s learning categories. Source: (Marton et al., 1993)									
Total *33 Descriptions of SL provided, 30 categorised									
MLC	ICI C	MLC	ICI C	MLC	ICI C	MLC	ICI C	MLC	ICI C
1	A	2	B	3	C	4	D	5	E
2		9		10		8		1	
\ -2 /    \ -2 /    \ -1 /									
* 3 ICISLD=UN/NC/ *5TD>1MLC									

Across the group of 28 EAP teachers, 33 experiences of student learning and 24 experiences of object of learning were described. Some descriptions emerged naturally, while others were in response to researcher’s questions of how the teacher perceived learning and teaching in the particular situations they described.

There were several differences between descriptions of student learning and object of learning that emerged in the ICI data. The most significant of these was the inclusion of ICI explicitly (eight times) and implicitly (four times) in descriptions of student learning. In contrast, descriptions of OL interactions were only mentioned three times—one time explicitly and two times implicitly (see Appendix E.8, column 1). This finding appears to lend support to a general perception that emerged across the group of teachers that ICI are frequently viewed as a teaching method or part of the teaching

process, but are not viewed as the object of learning or the specific focus of a particular lesson.

Further, all 28 transcripts had at least 1 description of student learning; in contrast, descriptions of object of learning were not evident in six transcripts. Finally, three descriptions of student learning were unclear and not categorised, whereas all descriptions of object of learning were understood and categorised without difficulty (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7 <i>EAP Teachers' Descriptions of Object of Learning</i>									
Comparison of ICI categories to Marton's learning categories. Source: (Marton et al., 1993)									
Total *24 Descriptions OL provided, 24 categorised									
ML	ICI	ML	ICI	ML	ICI	ML	ICI	ML	ICI
1	A	2	B	3	C	4	D	5	E
0		7		10		4		2	
\ -1 /		\ -1 /		\ -1 /					
NI		2		6		1		2	
TI		2		-		-		-	
6 transcripts No ICI OL D/ *3TD>1MLMC									

Throughout the analysis of ICI, SL and OL similarities in the data emerged. First, in both student learning (SL) and object of learning (OL) there were situations where individual teachers described perceptions that were categorised in more than one of Marton's learning categorical description; in the SL data there were five of these situations (Table 7.6) and in the OL data there were three (Table 7.7). Additionally, in both sets of data, ICI categories B and C were most dominant in his categories of description (Table 4.5.1) Marton describes these perceptions as follows: "Learning is viewed as memorising and reproducing or applying" across the transcripts as a whole; the information described as a focus of the lesson was academic structures and skills.

Similarities across data describing perceptions of student learning and object of learning in the lessons described were expected, as the situations included teaching and learning processes that occurred in the same situated lesson in relation to the same ICI.

There was one notable difference between the perceptions of learning described in the ICI study and the categories described in Marton's study (Marton et al., 1993). In the EAP teachers' descriptions of student learning, words suggesting that the tasks, materials or information were *new* frequently emerged (see phrases in bold):

"[Academic writing structures] were composed with mine as a guideline"; "... take on aboard some of the things we had read about"; "I think they walked out the door with a tool." The word "new" was explicitly used twice: "It was new they needed practice" and "It was a mechanism for him to take on new knowledge."

In these descriptions the concept of newness was described as a factor but did not seem to be the perception of actual learning that Marton describes in his initial category (Table 4.5.1, column 1). Therefore although descriptions of SL contained "newness of information as a factor," excerpts were categorised by the type of learning most emphasised in individual teachers' perceptions. It is possible that concepts of newness of information will differ with the type of L2 lessons described and with those that would occur in a course where a specific subject is taught. In descriptions of OL, concepts of newness were implied in statements where the teacher's role was described as a provider of information: "I want to give them some ..."; "I was teaching the students politics." Unlike the descriptions of SL, the term "new" or concept of newness did not emerge frequently as factors in the EAP teachers' descriptions of OL.

With the exception of the concept of "newness" that is prominently described in Marton's categories but less evident in the ICI excerpts of SL and OL, the EAP teachers' descriptions of learning in the ICI study closely aligned with each other and

with Marton's categories of description. Significantly, the described perceptions of SL and OL followed a hierarchical pattern typical of conceptual findings in many phenomenographic studies. The separate analysis of these statements in individual transcripts and across the transcripts as a whole also supported the conceptual patterns previously described in the ICI categories (Chapter 4). A comparison of the EAP teachers' perceptions of SL and OL also indicates relations between how learning and teaching are perceived and approached within descriptions of a situated lesson.

In those transcripts where more limited conceptions of ICI had been most prominent, descriptions of SL and OL frequently described learning as memorising or developing skills and then reproducing these skills (excerpts 1-3). Teachers' conceptions of learning were often consistent across both factors in the learning situation described, even though the descriptions of SL and OL frequently emerged at different points in the teachers' description; perceptions of OL were frequently described by teachers in conjunction with specific tasks described in the lessons, whereas perceptions of SL were more frequently described as an outcome of the lesson (for more excerpts see Appendix E.7).

1. SL: "The whole class worked on individual writing errors" ↔ OL: "produce and correct essays"
2. SL: "Use rules about quantifiers" ↔ OL: "academic structures"
3. SL: "Speaking with more fluency and using some of the structures" ↔ OL: "Test preparation ... sort of individual reproductive skill, I guess"

In those transcripts where more complex descriptions of ICI had been most prominent, descriptions of SL and OL often described a view of learning as understanding and applying skills and concepts (excerpts 4-5). The perception of learning described was often consistent across both factors in the learning situation described (for more excerpts see Appendix E.8).

4. SL: "to try and apply it (words and ideas) ... they have to think about what they are saying" ↔ OL: "To be able to say something that makes some kind of sense of relevance ... that actually produces some kind of thinking"
5. SL: "Communicate what is understood, make language clearer" ↔ OL: "conduct a simple survey"

In summary, the perceptions of OL and SL that emerged in the EAP teachers' descriptions of a situated lesson aligned closely with conceptions of learning and teaching published in other areas. Although there were differences in the ways SL and OL were described and experienced across the group, there also appeared to be some consistency between how the teachers described the object of learning and the student learning in the lesson described. ICI were consistently described, either explicitly or implicitly, as part of the learning process in the excerpts illustrated here and in the excerpts referring to learning in the lessons, across the group of teachers (Appendix E.8). In contrast, OCI were not consistently described as part of the learning process or object of learning across the group of EAP teachers.

#### **7.3.2.2 Differences in role: interactions and EAP teachers.**

Another difference between the ICI and OCI studies was illustrated in the variances in how teachers reported the role of ICI and OCI in their descriptions of teaching and learning situations (these differences are described in detail in Chapters 4 and 5). When more limited conceptions of ICI were reported, the role of these interactions in the situations described was often viewed as a "method" by which new information was transferred. When more limited conceptions of OCI were described, it was often explicitly stated that these interactions were "socially beneficial" to the learners but separate from the focus of classroom learning/teaching (see illustrations of



teaching practices in Figures 7.4 and 7.5 at the end of this chapter). The differences in role ICI and OCI were perceived to play are also illustrated in the categories of description for both phenomena (see Table 7.8, ICI Categories A-C and OCI Categories A-B).

Table 7.8 <i>ICI and OCI Categories of Description: Differences in Role</i>		
	ICI Categories	OCI Categories
More limited	⇒ A. ICI teachers' method ⇒ B. ICI teachers' and students' method ⇒ C. ICI teaching method provides opportunities for group problem solving	⇒ A. OCI are outside of class focus  ⇒ B. OCI are outside of class focus except in assigned tasks
More developed	⇒ D. ICI are the context for individual development ⇒ E. ICI are a forum where what is taught in class is linked to students' real world outside	⇒ C. OCI are outside of class focus but actively encouraged  ⇒ D. OCI are related to structures presented in class

In the ICI categories of description the teachers' perceptions of the role of ICI range from conception of these interactions as a teaching method to a conception of these interactions as a forum where what is taught in class is linked to the learners' outside world (see Table 7.8, column 1). Across the range of ICI categories these interactions are described as part of the learning and teaching processes described in the situated lesson. In the categories of description teachers' perceptions of the role of OCI range from a conception that these interactions are outside of the class focus to a conception that these interactions are related to the academic structures presented in class (see Table 7.8, column 2).

Unlike the interactions that occur in class, the role of interactions outside of the classroom were not described by all the teachers as part of the teaching and learning process that occurred in the situated lessons. In the more developed OCI conceptions, however, OCI did emerge in descriptions of situated lessons as related to L2 students' overall learning. In category C, for example, students' OCI experiences were described as actively encouraged in classroom discussions; and in category D, students' outside experiences were described as a necessary component in linking what was learned in class to the students' real world.

The differences in roles that ICI and OCI were perceived to play in the learning and teaching that occurred in classroom lessons also emerged in EAP teachers' descriptions of their own role as teachers in the lessons. In Appendix E.9, a list of how teachers described their own role is presented. In these descriptions ICI are often implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, part of the learning/teaching situation described. Descriptions of the role of the teacher appear to be closely connected to how the teacher perceives learning and teaching in that particular situation. Following (Table 7.9, column 1) is a list of some of the terms and metaphors that have been taken from descriptions the EAP teachers used when asked to reflect on their own role in the situations they had described (highlighted in Appendix E.9).

Table 7.9 <i>EAP Teachers' Descriptions of Teachers' Role</i>	
My role is ...	ICI
Basically a guide, a support giving structures rather than telling them what to do	➤ Research questions
We learn together we go on a journey ... I'm an expert on how to communicate in English	➤ Communicate in English
Activities are top down; they tend to come from me but then I shift a lot of the responsibility onto them.	➤ Topic, share ideas
I sort of guide them, I make them think about it	➤ Discussion
I'm not parental but I sort of keep control	➤ Communicate
I try to give them a balance of skills and content	➤ In saying ...
My role would be in supplying help ... I guided them.	➤ Peers will help clarify your ideas
My job is to introduce the framework	➤ Discussion
My job is to help them develop concepts but not actually impose my ideas	➤ N/A
I teach them how to write and answer	➤ There's an interaction element but it's critical thinking
I highlight structures ... get their language to them	➤ Build interaction, communication
Guided them along the track	➤ Students process their own recollection
I just lead them in the right direction, facilitating the learning process.	➤ Discussion
I evaluate, facilitate ... I selected the activity because of a weakness in communicating English.	➤ The end is language
Just providing schematic or scaffolding framework	➤ N/A
I sort of diagram the process	➤ Interactive learning
I see my role as a teacher, as a friend, somebody they trust	➤ Discussion
Giving them background information	
I wanted to scaffold, keep them interested	
More like a supervisor	
I think learning happens when you teach others so I set up a lot of opportunities for that	
My job lies in bringing the whole view together	

In situations where perceptions of teachers' role were described, learning and teaching were often perceived differently even though the same term was used. The term "guide," for example, was used in situations where the perception of learning concerned memorising and reproducing a particular structure, applying a particular structure or concept, or where students develop and change their own concepts. Column 2 in Table 7.9 illustrates how ICI was included in the descriptions of teachers' role. ICI were frequently described as a factor in the teaching and learning process ("communicate," "share ideas," "build interaction," "interactive learning"). Sometimes

ICI were described as an outcome of the learning process (“communicate in English,” “the end is language”). In some cases it was implied (see “Discussion” italicised), and in a few instances the role of ICI was unclear (see NA).

In contrast to the various ways teachers’ ICI were consistently included in the EAP teachers’ descriptions of their teaching role, OCI were typically described as either related or not related to in-class teaching. Descriptions of teachers’ role did not appear to be closely related to the teachers’ perceptions of teaching and learning (as they did in descriptions of ICI in lessons) but appeared to be connected more to their perceptions of the role of OCI. In Appendix E.10, a list of how the teachers described their own role is highlighted, and a list of some of these descriptions is provided in column 1 of Table 7.10.

Table 7.10 EAP Teachers’ Descriptions of Teachers’ Role	
My role is ...	OCI
I get to see the product, not the process. I encourage <b>them to live it</b>	➤ <b>The choice is theirs</b>
I link what is learnt to what is out there ... I’m an expert on how to communicate in English	➤ They know what they need and how they’ll use it
I suggest things to <b>work on in their own time</b>	➤ ....
<b>They have to take the risk</b>	➤ ....
I try to see it from the learners’ point of view	➤ They have difficulty meeting Australians
I generally do some work on colloquial expressions	➤ They don’t want speaking
I encourage them to use English in and outside of class give some advice; beyond that <b>it’s up to them</b>	➤ This is what we do in the library
I don’t think I’ve made (ICI) conscious enough in my mind as something to watch for	➤ Sometimes they ask questions
My job would be in supplying and designing a task	➤ ....
I welcome (questions); I hope what I say encourages them	➤ ....
(In class) is the only time I actually hear them; I don’t know what happens afterwards	➤ ....
There is a place for discussions (about OCI) in class, not just before or after class.	➤ ....
I include <b>tasks that have to be done outside</b>	➤ ....
I think of ways they can interact more genuinely	➤ Like eavesdropping on buses
I try to give them practical advice and practice	➤ They don’t (OCI)
Il think that <b>students that learn outside make that choice</b>	➤ ....
I encourage them and give anecdotes	➤ ....
I’ve done tasks to help them	
I get them to do naughty things	
I encourage them but <b>it isn’t part of the course</b>	
It’s hard to do things that <b>aren’t part of the course</b>	
All I can do is encourage them and tell them it’s important	

Perceptions of teaching roles appeared to be directly influenced by how the role of OCI was perceived within the specific lesson described and the overall course in which the lesson was situated. In some situations OCI were explicitly described as separate from in-class teaching (“It isn’t part of the course”). Others implied that OCI were important to overall L2 learning but not a focus of the course (“I’m focused on their writing”; “I don’t think I’ve made (ICI) conscious enough in my mind as something to watch for”). Frequently OCI were described as the learners’ responsibility (“the choice is theirs”; “It’s up to them”) (see descriptions in bold, in Table 7.10). The most common role described was one of “encouraging”; however, the outcomes of encouragement or reasons for encouragement within the specific lesson or throughout the course were frequently not described (see empty spaces [...] column 2, Table 7.10).

Teachers that described OCI as related to the teaching and learning within a particular lesson or the course in which the lesson was situated described their teaching role in one of three ways. The first was a perception that OCI were not directly related to the lesson or the course but were related to L2 students’ overall learning, and therefore that the teachers’ role was to intermittently encourage OCI in classroom teaching (“I generally do some work on colloquial expressions”; “I think of ways they can interact more genuinely”; “I try to give them practical advice and practice”).

In the second situation the perception of OCI was the same as described above; however, the teachers perceived their own role of encouraging students to interact outside of class to be more active (“I suggest things to work on in their own time”; “I’ve done tasks to help them”; “I try to give them practical advice and practice”).

In the third situation OCI were perceived as related to the teaching and learning within a lesson and related to the course as a whole. The teachers’ role is described as more connected to the actual learning and teaching described in the lesson. In the first

situation the teacher describes the teaching role as an interactive learning process, with the students as experts on OCI and the teacher as an expert in the L2 language; the teaching and learning process is described as a joint effort where what is presented in class is connected to what the students need outside of class (“I link what is learnt to what is out there”; “I’m an expert on how to communicate in English”; “They know what they need and how they’ll use it.”)

In the second description learning is seen as building and developing the students’ own concepts, and the teachers’ role is trying to understand how the learner perceives or experiences what is learned (“I try and take it out of an academic context; I try to see it from the learners’ point of view”).

When OCI were perceived as related to the process of learning and teaching in a lesson, the matter of who initiated the OCI, what was discussed in class, and the outcome or intended outcome of the discussion was also more frequently described. For example, in one situation (Appendix E.10) a teacher stated, “Sometimes they ask questions,” then indicated that these discussions should take place in class as well as outside of class, and described the context of the discussion (“I gave them feedback”) and the intended outcome from previous experience (“If they are able to communicate meaning successfully it’s wonderful for their self-confidence”).

#### **7.4 Relations between ICI and OCI: Conceptual Development**

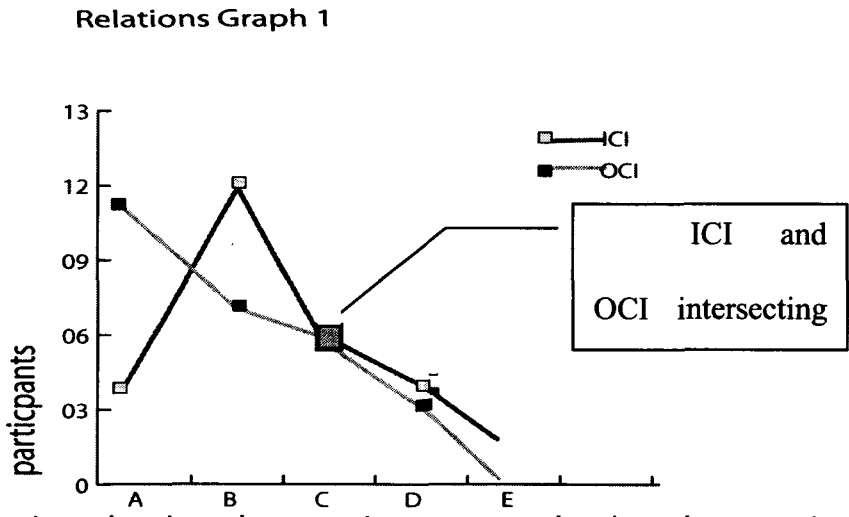
**By learning you will teach;  
by teaching you will understand.**

—Latin Proverb

Relations between conceptual developments of both phenomena were an unexpected but very important finding. It could be predicted that as ICI are commonly addressed in

teacher training worldwide, and as the bulk of L2 research on reported interactions focuses on ICI, teachers in general would most likely have more highly developed understandings of how these interactions relate to the actual learning of a second language than they would of how OCI relate to the actual learning and teaching of a second language. The difference in number of conceptual categories described for ICI and OCI (see Section 7.3) and the differences in the way the EAP teachers describe student learning and object of learning (see Section 7.2.3.1) support this conjecture. However, a comparison of categories of description for ICI and OCI shows a pattern of relationship between both phenomena (see Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2. Relations between in-class and out-of-class interaction



At no point in the range was there a situation where a less developed conception of ICI was reported with a more developed conception of OCI, or a less developed conception of OCI reported with a more developed ICI conception.

It could also be argued that teachers with underdeveloped or highly developed conceptions of one type of interaction would be more likely to have underdeveloped or highly developed conceptions of another type of interaction. No statistical link between the numbers of transcripts or teachers represented in each category was evident across

both COD. However, in both the ICI and OCI studies, similarities between the conceptual developments of both phenomena appear across the range.

The relations between ICI and OCI categories of description were demonstrated across the range in a number of ways. At a macro level, the ways that ICI and OCI are described by teachers in their practical experience (see Illustration 5.5.1.D and Illustration 4.5.D) are connected across the more complex conceptual categories of both phenomena. Both ICI and OCI categories of description follow a hierarchal pattern of development and also appear to intersect or connect at the more complete levels of conception (Table 7.1). At a micro level, relations between the categories of description occur in teachers' descriptions of teaching (Table 7.2) and in their descriptions of L1 use in class and L2 use outside of class (Tables 7.2.1.A and B). Although EAP teachers' descriptions of students' ability to interact inside and outside of the classroom are dissimilar, relations between teachers' reported awareness of students' ability and opportunity to interact outside of class follow similar patterns across both categories of description (Chart 7.2). Finally, EAP teachers' descriptions of their own teaching role (Tables 7.9 and 7.10), and excerpts that illustrate connections between conceptual development, not only align with categories of description for teaching and learning of other subject areas in a university context (Marton et al., 1993; Prosser et al., 1994), but also in how these interactions and perceptions of teaching and learning are described in the teachers' own words:

My job is to introduce the framework; they process their own recollections [OCI experiences]. (Table 7.9)

My job is to help them develop concepts but not actually impose my ideas. (Table 7.9)

My job lies in bringing the whole view together. (Table 7.9)

I link what is learnt to what is out there. (Table 7.10)



Relations between conceptual development of the ICI and OCI categories are indicated not only in how perceptions of these interactions and teaching and learning are expressed, but also in how the teachers described the experiences that influenced their own understanding of these interactions.

### **7.5 Conceptual Development in ICI and OCI Categories of Description: experiences**

In mainstream educational research, a teacher's conceptual development regarding the teaching/learning of a specific subject is regularly attributed to the teacher's own knowledge of the subject and their experiences both as a learner and teacher of that subject (Battista, 1994; Shulman, 1987; Wineburg & Wilson, 1991). In both the ICI and OCI frameworks teachers' prior experiences were reported by the teachers to influence their own conceptual development. However, when comparing the "interactions studies" to research on teachers' knowledge published in other fields, one significant difference is apparent. That is, while conceptual development in general was attributed to these factors, complex conceptual development of both phenomena was highly attributed to specific events outside of teacher training, professional development or general experiences as L2 learners. These experiences were described as unique to the teacher and not evidenced across the group. In fact those six transcripts where situated experiences described as highly influential were most highly represented were also transcripts that were classified as those of the highest-order categories in both frameworks. The teachers that described complex conceptions of ICI and OCI most frequently also reported situations that provided opportunities to see the L2 process in a different way, often over a period of time. Following is a list of some of the situations

described by participants when reporting particular experiences associated with concepts of ICI and OCI.

After 30 years of teaching experience: “I believe there is no question” about a relationship between students’ L2 learning progress and OCI; “Those that don’t do not progress.”

After a negative experience learning L2 in the L1 country and a positive experience in the L2 country, when describing the positive experience the participant states, “Emphasis in class was on communication, not error correction, and the opportunities to use the language outside of class were challenging. For me the way that you learn is by having to communicate.”

With experience in learning two languages in two target language countries - one successful, one not – the participant observed that the difference was that he/she took advantage of opportunities to interact informally in one but didn’t in the other.

Participant described a unique opportunity to interact in the L2 in an L1 country: “I was immersed in it every day ... I was curious about the culture, learning how to speak in this new language, watching expressions, listening, experiencing the difference in the situation.”

Another also described having frequent opportunities in using the L2 when studying the language formally in his/her L1 country, and additional opportunities to continue studying formally and work in the L2 in a target language country. Later the participant described two separate experiences as a teacher with students’ L2 learning, with success coming through taking advantage of opportunities to use the language.

Some participants described combinations of specific experiences as influencing how they perceived interactions in L2 teaching and learning; such as experience studying the L2 in a target language country for a substantial period of time,

experience in researching learning concepts, actively learning concepts of learning and teaching as a university student, and applying this knowledge to one's own teaching situation and experiences observing learning successes in the practice of teaching.

These excerpts describe in the teachers' own words a belief that conceptual development of L2 ICI and OCI, or understanding these interactions in a critically different way, was influenced by very specific situations these teachers had experienced. These experiences, as the proverb at the beginning of this section suggests, occurred in situations where the teachers were both learners and teachers of a second language. In none of the descriptions did a teacher attribute their conception to a single experience. The understanding of interactions they describe came about through experiencing these interactions differently and having an opportunity to experience these interactions and the L2 teaching and learning in different ways.

This chapter has presented some of the similarities and differences between the ICI and OCI categories of description that emerged in the investigation presented. Relations between the two categorical descriptions were also indicated in various ways. One of the relations indicated was that in those situations where more complex understandings of both phenomena were described, teachers also described prior experiences where opportunities to experience these interactions in different ways were instrumental in developing their understanding of interactions. The critically different ways in which the EAP teachers experienced interactions inside and outside of the classroom is an important finding, because differences in the ways these interactions were perceived also influenced the ways the teachers approached learning, teaching, and their own role in lessons where these interactions were experienced.

## Chapter 8

### Discussion and Conclusion

#### 8.1 Introduction

**Homines dum docent discunt**

**(Even while they teach, men learn.)**

– Seneca (the “Younger”) C. 4 BC - AD 65

Roman philosopher and poet

The primary purpose of this investigation was to develop an understanding of how L2 teachers conceive of in-class and out-of-class interactions, and secondarily, to explore if these conceptions influence how teachers approach teaching in EAP classrooms. In other words, this was an exploration into how a group of teachers perceive two phenomena that they experience in an educational setting. All educational research is motivated to a certain extent by questions of how something is learned or taught. Why do some people develop a deeper understanding of something than others? Questions seeking to identify how something is understood cannot easily be separated from the process of how that understanding developed. If computers did L2 teaching, we could simply measure what was in a computer's data banks; usually the origin of the information or how the information got there would not be important. With computers, erroneous information is simply deleted and blocked from re-entering, and if pertinent information is missing it is simply inserted. While computers are helpful teaching tools, at present language teaching is done by humans and will continue this way in the foreseeable future; because L2 teachers experience such a multitude of situations and questions daily, it would be impossible to predict and prepare a computer to respond to these unpredictable variations.

Previous research trying to identify what L2 teachers know and how L2 teachers learn generally report that understanding something is a process. During this process teachers incorporate what they've learned in teacher training, along with their unique experiences, previous understandings, and beliefs; they also will have a unique set of responses to contextual factors that alter with each situation, classroom and students the L2 teacher experiences while teaching (for an overview of 15 studies on L2 teachers' learning see Freeman & Richards, 1993). The findings presented in the thesis shed light on the process of L2 teachers' conceptual development, by closely looking at the range of conceptions of ICI and OCI that emerged across a group of 28 EAP teachers, and by looking closely at the experiences the teachers describe as influencing their concepts of these interactions in the process of learning and teaching a second language. The overall findings of the Teachers' Beliefs Study appear to support the proposition that Seneca (above) made long ago, echoed by an EAP teacher who participated in the study (below), observing that the ways that teachers understand things change through having the opportunity to look them differently in our own experiences as teachers and as learners:

**A lot of my good teaching is when**

**I'm learning something as well as they are.**

—Participant in Bunts-Anderson's Beliefs Study 2003

(EAP Teacher NCELTR, Macquarie University)

### ***8.1.1 The Investigative Process: Why multiple titles? Scope of the Investigation and Influences for Investigative Path Taken***

The project, titled "Relations between Language Teachers' Conceptions of Out-of-Class Interactions and Teaching Practices," began as many inquiries do, with a

simple question: “What do L2 teachers” think about out-of-class interactions?” In most enquiries into teachers’ thinking the practical application of developing an understanding of what teachers know and believe is to further explore if and how this understanding influences the teachers’ teaching practice—hence the title of the project. As in most explorations into the unknown, the researcher discovered that this seemingly simple question was actually complex, and additional questions emerged, during a review of literature and through the process of the investigation, that needed to be explored in conjunction with seeking an answer to the original quest (see Chapters 1 and 2, Part A and B; and Chapter 3, Part A).

Consequently, during the process of the project the investigation took the path of multiple inquiries, and even separate studies, when exploring additional questions or findings that emerged. The short title of the project, “The Teachers’ Beliefs Study,” naturally emerged through the investigative decision to look at the inquiry through the teachers’ perspective and to develop an understanding using the teachers’ own words as much as possible (see investigative process, Chapter 3, Part B). In reviewing the literature prior to the investigation, it became apparent that in the field of teaching, developing an understanding of the phenomenon of OCI was in a practical sense connected to the phenomenon of ICI—particularly as the inquiry would be following the path of exploring one phenomenon through the context of describing the other. This development widened the scope of the investigation significantly, and two separate studies were undertaken: “Teachers’ Beliefs of OCI and Relations to Practice” (Chapter 5) and Teachers’ Beliefs of ICI and Practice” (Chapter 6) with the hope that in developing an understanding of both phenomena, a comparison of both would provide a more informed understanding of the original question posed (see Sections 8.1 and 8.2). Developing an understanding of teachers’ perspectives is a difficult task and a

large one in the time provided to complete a thesis; therefore a decision was made to narrow the scope to the identification and description of the teachers' experiences of both ICI and OCI, but also to pay close attention to any factors and influences that the teachers described as influential to how they perceived both types of interactions.

In analysing data for the first stage of the investigation, there was a notable spontaneous emergence of individual experiences across the group of EAP teachers, described as occurring during and outside the situated lessons. These experiences were clearly considered by the teachers as important factors in informing or influencing particular conceptions and action, and were therefore considered carefully in the investigative process. In this manner the exploration took the additional path of looking closely at the EAP descriptions or context-specific experiences and personal experiences, with the teacher in the role both as a learner and teacher, to better understand the teachers' conceptions of both interactions (see Chapters 6 and 7 and Sections 8.2 and 8.3 of this chapter).

When the choice was made to base the investigation on data collected exclusively from teachers' descriptions of their own experiences, the researcher was aware that definitive claims of influence between the conceptions that emerged and actual practice were not possible. Actual teaching practices would not be observed or recorded, and the possible influence of the conceptions discovered would not be measured by exploring possible qualitative links between the teachers' descriptions and learners' descriptions to see if similar conceptions emerged between teachers and students. Neither would a quantifiable study measuring student learning from course assessments or from a single lesson be contrasted with the concepts a teacher most dominantly described in a single lesson. It is my belief that teachers' and learners' conceptual development is constantly changing, and that teachers can hold multiple

concepts of a particular phenomenon that may or may not emerge in a single lesson. For some in the research community it is not possible to make what would be considered an “empirical” assertion of actual influence of teachers’ conceptions on practice without objective, observable and duplicable data on which to base reported and future findings.

At the start of the project it was decided that definitive claims about the influence of teachers’ beliefs on practice would be outside of the scope of the thesis; however, descriptions of practices described by the teachers would be made in the context of the investigation, and any descriptions of influences of teachers’ beliefs on practice from the teachers’ perspective would be included in the findings. Descriptions showing patterns between teachers’ beliefs and practice did emerge during the investigation. “Practices” remained in the title of the project and were also included in the original research questions posed:

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

### ***8.1.2 Thesis Aims Review***

The research presented in the thesis aims (see Section 1.5) and throughout the thesis in connection to different findings contribute to four general areas: 1) in developing an understanding of ICI and OCI through exploring the teachers’ perspectives; 2) informing explorations into how teachers perceive the relationship



between interactions inside and outside the classroom to their role as L2 classroom teachers; 3) to better inform our understanding of L2 teachers' conceptions in general; and 4) to provide insight into the influence teachers' conceptions of these interactions have on the teaching and learning that occurs in the L2 classroom.

In Chapter 1 the genesis of the investigation was outlined and the investigative questions explored in the thesis were posed. In Chapter 2, Part A and Part B, a review of relevant literature emphasized the role of OCI and the influence teachers' beliefs are perceived to play in language development and learning and teaching. Gaps in current understandings of L2 teachers' conceptions and of OCI and ICI were presented, and a need for further explorations was argued. In Chapter 3, Part A and B, the theoretical and methodological underpinnings for the investigative approach adopted were presented; the inquiry was situated in the current body of L2 research and details on the participants; and data collection and analysis for the investigation were offered. In Chapters 4 and 5 the investigation was carried out as two separate studies: "Teachers' Conceptions of ICI" and "Teachers' Conceptions' of OCI." Two sets of categories of description emerged from teachers' descriptions of the phenomena, along with similar patterns of how these interactions were seen to be approached in the teaching and learning of a situated lesson (see Illustrations 4.5A-E and 5.5.1A-D). In analysing teachers' descriptions of both phenomena, differences between how teachers perceived ICI and OCI from their own personal experiences in teaching and learning emerged; these were presented in Chapter 6. In Chapter 7 the frameworks of the ICI and OCI categories of description were situated; and the differences, similarities and relations between both frameworks were explored.

The aim of Chapter 8 is to relate the investigation and its findings back to the relevant literature and to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the investigation, and

in doing so, to contribute to the four areas outlined, while proposing avenues for future exploration. To achieve this aim this chapter is divided into sections. The first and second discuss the development and relevance of the two sets of categories of description that resulted from the investigation. The third and fourth section reviews and discusses findings that emerged from comparisons of both the ICI and OCI categories, and the fifth section details the significance of the results. In the sixth section the strengths and weaknesses of the investigative approaches used in the project are examined. The seventh section considers how the findings from the investigation fit with current knowledge of the role of ICI and OCI in the teaching and learning of a second language. The eighth section provides suggestions for future research, and the ninth section concludes the thesis.

## **8.2 Developing a framework for ICI and OCI Categories of Description**

The primary concern of this thesis was to develop an understanding of OCI through exploring L2 teachers' conceptions of these interactions. This inquiry was approached initially through eliciting 28 EAP teachers' conceptions of ICI and OCI through their own descriptions of these interactions in situated lessons. From the teachers' descriptions of their own experiences the conceptions of ICI and OCI that emerged in their descriptions were identified and analysed and two separate categories of description were developed. In this section the significance of these categories of description in informing an understanding of these interactions and addressing a weakness in the literature is discussed.

The impetus of the thesis was the idea that a phenomenon can be better understood when the perceptions of a group of people that have the opportunity to experience the phenomena are explored, and when the critically different ways that the

phenomenon is experienced and perceived are understood (Marton & Booth, 1997). The tenet that the conceptions a group holds about a particular phenomenon within a situated context are limited in number and are interconnected has been replicated in phenomenographic studies most frequently in the field of higher education (see Section 2.1.5 and Section 3.1.3.2). This tenet is also supported in other areas of research that are investigating conceptions across groups in different ways, such as neurology and research into unconscious awareness (for an overview of research based on this tenet and some innovative applications for findings, see Appendix F.1).

In the investigation presented, phenomenographic research methods were applied to uncover the conceptions 28 EAP teachers held of the two phenomena, ICI and OCI. In particular, the investigation wanted to discover if the teachers shared a particular set of concepts about ICI and OCI or if the ways in which these interactions were viewed were individual. The results of the investigation were similar to the research on conceptions of other phenomena and groups outlined briefly above (and extensively in the Literature Review, Chapter 2, Parts A and B); that is, distinct descriptions of the phenomena emerged that were consistently described across the group. These conceptions were described in detail through excerpts from the participants in the thesis; for more information on ICI conceptions see Chapter 4, and for OCI conceptions identified, see Chapter 5.

### ***8.2.1 Two Sets of Categories of Descriptions Were Developed***

The conceptions described for both ICI and OCI were identified and then analysed and described in two distinct formats titled “Categories of Description” (COD). Only conceptions that were representative of the group were placed in the categories. In the ICI COD, five distinct conceptions emerged across the group (for a

detailed description, see Sections 4.4-4.7). In the OCI COD, four distinct conceptions emerged across the group (for detailed descriptions see Sections 5.4-5.7). Identifying teachers’ conceptions of ICI and OCI was the major focus of the project; Table 8.1, which presents a summary of both COD, is reprinted below.

Inside and outside interactions beneficial to L2 teaching and learning	Table 8.1 Hierarchical format of ICI and OCI categories		
	More limited	ICI Categories ⇒ A. ICI teachers’ method ⇒ B. ICI teachers’ and students’ method ⇒ C. ICI teaching method provides opportunities for group problem solving	OCI Categories ⇒ A. OCI are outside of class focus ⇒ B. OCI are outside of class focus except in assigned tasks
	More complex	⇒ D. ICI are the context for individual development ⇒ E. ICI are a forum where what is taught in class is linked to students’ real world outside	⇒ C. OCI are outside of class focus but actively encouraged in class ⇒ D. OCI are related to academic structures presented in class

Conceptions of both phenomena emerged in a hierarchical pattern from more limited to more complex concepts of ICI and OCI, but qualitative differences between how these interactions were perceived by the teachers were apparent. The most prominent difference was the variation in how the interactions were perceived, described in teachers’ descriptions of situated lessons. ICI from the perspectives of the teachers were viewed as part of the learning and teaching process across the range of five distinct categories. In contrast, OCI were perceived as apart from classroom teaching and learning except in the most complex category, where they were viewed as an active factor in the process.

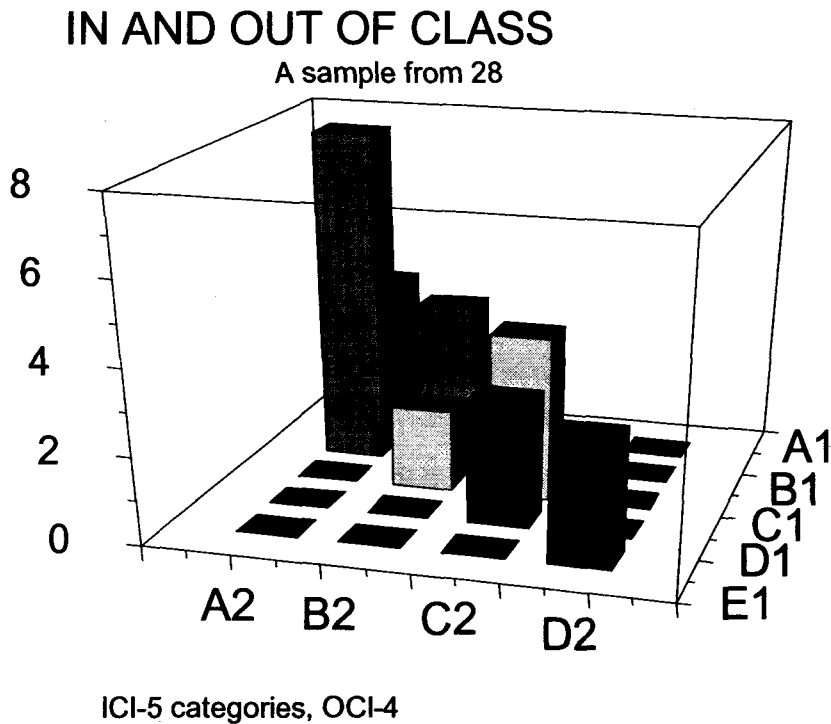
From a phenomenographic perspective, the fundamental focus of research has to do with the variation in the “ways” things are experienced. The OCI and ICI

categories of description show variation in how the EAP teachers experienced the “what” (or object), which in the Teachers’ Beliefs Study were the ICI and OCI. In general, categories of description are important because they show “a way of experiencing something,” and in this thesis the COD show that each type of interaction was experienced in a variation and experienced in a broad sense quite differently from one another. It has been posited that developing an understanding of the experiences (EAP teachers’ experiences of ICI and OCI) is related to how a person’s awareness is structured (Rovio-Johansson, 1999). In this sense the ICI and OCI COD illustrated in Table 8.1 are interesting because the ICI are reported to be experienced (in variation) across the group of teachers, whereas the OCI (except in the more complex OCI category) are described as separate from the lesson and focally different (for a description of focal awareness see Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 100).

This separation of OCI from classroom teaching by many of the teachers that participated in the investigation indicates that ICI and OCI are situated differently in the teachers’ awareness. In the context of discussing situated lessons in the Teachers’ Beliefs Study, ICI are described as being “part of the lessons,” and in the centre or forefront of the teachers’ awareness and OCI, they are explicitly described as separate from the focus of classroom teaching but part of a more general or peripheral awareness in the teaching and learning of L2.

The researcher combined the categories of description—the collective “ways” ICI and OCI were experienced and described across the group—and then categorized them into two separate frameworks, which indicate that there were seven patterns of category of description of both phenomena described in the same lesson (see Chart 8.1).

Chart 8.1 Count of Combined ICI and OCI COD



Combining the ICI and OCI categories was done in three steps: 1) all the combinations of COD most prominent in each transcript for both interactions were identified; 2) the number of combinations identified were counted across the group of transcripts; and 3) a matrix counting and illustrating the number of combined COD for ICI and OCI was developed (see Appendix F.2 for data in three steps of the process described). The most prominent combination of COD that emerged across the transcripts was combination B1-A2, which emerged eight times (see Chart 8.1). This combination indicates that in the lesson described, the combination of ICI and OCI categories that was most notable was the perception that ICI were both a teachers' and a students' method (Table 7.1, ICI category B) and that OCI were perceived as an outside-of class focus (Table 7.1, OCI category A).

In a visual way Chart 8.1 indicates that in the situated lessons described in the study, ICI and OCI were perceived differently as a focus in the lesson and were also

situated differently in the EAP teachers' awareness. The difference in focus (or what phenomenographers have termed as "differences in discernment") is significant to phenomenographic theory, as phenomenographers argue that it is the way that various parts of a phenomenon are discerned that leads to how that phenomenon is understood (Cope, 2000; Marton & Booth, 1997; K. A. Patrick 1998; Prosser, et al., 1994; Rovio-Johansson, 1999).

A simple illustration of increase in awareness of various aspects of a phenomenon indicating a more complex understanding was provided by Marton and Booth in a description of children drawing maps (see Example 5.12, p. 106 in Marton & Booth, 1997). In this example the constraints of being aware of several things in a figural sense is described as a progression in children's map drawing, which frequently starts as a focus on the logical correspondence of objects in a landscape. Sometimes the quantity of objects in a certain landscape (such as a house, trees and road), often drawn in a linear fashion, shows the logical awareness of the child, as they transform what was identified in their awareness to a picture or map. Increasingly advanced levels of map drawing illustrating other aspects of the landscape, such as spatial relations between the objects (the trees are in front of the house) or more detail (the house has two windows) and variation between the objects (one tree is taller than the others) reflect an increase in awareness of the phenomena.

The knowledge provided by the OCI and ICI COD regarding this difference in awareness between both types of interaction also suggests a path for future exploration, as recently a number of phenomenographic researchers have reported that a change in awareness of phenomena runs parallel to a change in focus (Rovio-Johansson, 1999; Runesson, 1999; Yan, 1999). These findings indicate that an increase in awareness of the meaning ascribed to the phenomenon of OCI could correlate to how these

interactions are situated in the teachers' awareness in specific instances. Descriptions in Section 8.3 of this chapter from the EAP teachers that participated in the investigation would seem to support this view.

### **8.2.2 Significance of ICI and OCI COD**

#### **8.2.2.1 Identifying and describing patterns of conceptions across groups of teachers**

Having knowledge about teachers' understandings is likely to make teaching and educational development more focused and effective (Dall'Alba, 2000). Breen and colleagues, in a paper describing the relations between principles (what teachers think) and practices of 18 experienced ESL teachers, present four main reasons why this type of knowledge is significant (Breen et al., 2001, pp. 471-472); these have been summarized from a phenomenographic perspective below, with reference to sections of the thesis that describe these points in more detail:

- Identifying the experiences teachers describe in relation to their classroom practice can compliment observational studies by enabling research to move beyond description of action towards an understanding and explanation of action from the teachers' perspective (see Section 2.2.1).
- Once particular conceptions or "principles" that are shared across a group have been identified, this experientially-based "know-how" may serve as a base to further inform initial education and can be used for reflection in ongoing teacher development programs (see Section 2.2.6).
- Greater awareness of frameworks or beliefs held across groups of teachers in a particular situation can inform curriculum policy or whether any



type of innovation (adoption of a new technique, textbook or curriculum) is plausible in that context (see Section 2.2.5).

- Much of the current and past teaching pedagogy in the field of L2 teaching and learning has emanated from academic traditions, institutions, writers and textbooks that are some distance from the actual teaching context. Frameworks of teachers' thinking that are derived from the perspective of teachers doing the classroom work in different situations may help generate practical "grounded" alternatives for language pedagogy (see Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.4).

#### **8.2.2.2 The COD address a weakness in L2 literature**

The ICI and OCI categories of description address a general weakness identified in the L2 literature—the need to develop frameworks to ground future explorations of what it is teachers believe and how these understandings may influence practice. The field of L2 research on teacher cognition is relatively new (for a summary of the literature conducted for this investigation see Section 1.2, and all sections in Chapter 2, Part A). In an extensive review of the status of L2 research on what S. Borg (2003b) terms "teacher cognition," S. Borg claims that although the areas of grammar and literacy have received some attention, "other major areas, such as the teaching of speaking and listening, remain unstudied from a teacher cognition perspective" (p. 105).

The review of L2 teaching cognition literature focusing on both ICI and OCI conducted for the investigation presented supports S. Borg's (2003b) claim (see Table 2.5). Therefore, the development of two descriptive frameworks of how ICI and OCI are described from the perspective of 28 teachers addresses both a general need for

more exploration into L2 conceptions, and a specific need for preliminary inquiries to begin building our knowledge of spoken interaction from the teachers' perspective.

The ICI and OCI COD developed in the investigation also address a need for more information on both types of interactions from the teachers' perspective—specifically, in a review of broad L2 literature, the need to develop an understanding of how teachers believe both types of interactions relate to the teaching and learning of a second language. Previously ICI in particular have been explored extensively through theoretical perspectives and from the learners' perspectives (see Sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3). There has been very little published material on OCI in the general body of L2 literature, either in the form of empirical investigations, discussions of learning theory, or application of various teaching methodologies that continually emerge in the field of L2 education (see Section 2.1.3). Nevertheless, the importance placed on OCI in the process of L2 learning is also well documented (see Sections 1.2 and 1.3; Section 2.1.1; and Chapter 5).

#### **8.2.2.3 Application of the OCI and ICI COD descriptions.**

In the previous sections the significance of identifying and categorizing descriptions of how L2 teachers perceive ICI and OCI was discussed. At the start of this investigation it was unknown whether shared beliefs regarding these interactions would be found, although the importance of this research was discussed in detail in the literature reviewed in this thesis (see Chapter 2, Part A and Part B, and Chapter 3, Part A). Therefore, in this section three of the various ways COD developed in other situated educational contexts have been applied will be provided to assist in foregrounding the relevance of the ICI and OCI COD presented here within previously successful use of such categories.

1. In 2004, an application of COD was published in the form of a set of categories used to describe the learning concepts and approaches to study experienced in a longitudinal study of indigenous university students. The COD were used to help identify a need for specific educational support that emerged as an important factor in the university experience of these students. This information can be used to inform innovations that can benefit other students in similar situations in the future (see Boulton-Lewis et al., 2000, 2004).
2. In 2003, the results of a comparison study that was designed to usefully apply knowledge acquired from COD developed from students' understandings of particular difficult economic concepts. Once the varieties of ways that the students perceived and experienced these economic concepts were understood, the researcher shared this information with teachers. Teachers used this information, along with sharing their own experiences in learning and teaching that specific concept, to plan lessons and develop various learning situations where students could experience these economic concepts in different ways, so that a more complex understanding of these concepts could be improved across the groups of students see (Pang & Marton, 2003).
3. In a study published in 2001, researchers developed COD to better understand students' and teachers' literacy understanding. Knowledge derived from the COD developed was used by the researchers to argue against a generally held conception of teachers of literature that there was one way to teach literacy understanding; the study showed that in fact students and teachers understood and approached texts in a variety of ways, and by developing the COD, a

significant proportion of these variations in understanding can be seen (Pang & Marton, 2003).

### **8.3 Comparison of ICI and OCI Frameworks: Findings**

The second stage in the investigative process was a comparison of the ICI and OCI categories of description developed in the first stage of the investigative process. This section will discuss the relevance of findings that resulted from comparisons of the EAP teachers' descriptions of both phenomena, the emergence of patterns between conceptions described, how learning and teaching were perceived, and how teachers described their own role as teachers in the situations described.

**Teachers, after all, are people—unique, individual, multidimensional human beings. They have personal histories that significantly affect their professional role; they bring different values and objectives ... and personal predilections into school; and most important, they are insightful knowers of their classrooms, who reflect upon, justify, and critique what goes on there. (Carew & Lightfoot, 1979, p. 3)**

The previous section discussed variations in how the EAP teachers described experiences with ICI and OCI from a “what” perspective across both COD. But the experience of a phenomenon also includes the “how” or action aspect that is also related to the phenomenon explored (Rovio-Johansson, 1999). This section will consider how 28 teachers described experiences of learning and teaching and their own role as teachers in relation to the ICI and OCI situations investigated. Also explicated will be the emergence of patterns of similarities and differences of both specific COD, and the relevance of findings that resulted from comparisons of the EAP teachers' descriptions of how both phenomena were experienced in the situated lesson.

### ***8.3.1 Learning and Teaching: The active role of ICI and OCI during lessons in relation to both phenomena***

In Chapter 4 and 5 the initial results of how teachers experienced the act of ICI and OCI in situated lessons were explored. As a group the teachers described the experience of learning through OCI in three distinct ways. The first two ways were in individual personal conversations, and when students were assigned tasks outside of class where OCI was considered a component. In both cases OCI were described as separate from the situated lessons and were not mentioned as part of them (see COD A and B in Chapter 5). Therefore, the following summary of how interactions were described as actively experienced in the situated lessons does not include instances of personal conversations that incorporate OCI; nor does it include situations where OCI were assumed to take place in required tasks for the course but were described as “sometimes occurring” during the course, while not being evident or related from the teachers’ perspective to the lessons described.

Across the group of teachers ICI were described as experienced in the lesson by all 28 teachers, and the movement and purpose of these ICI were experienced in four distinctly different ways:

- 1) ICI was seen as a method or means of transferring information, usually occurring in a circular pattern where the teachers initiated ICI and students provided a response. ICI was centred on the topic of a lesson. ICI itself was not a focus of the learning experience (for examples see illustrations and excerpts in ICI Categories A and B in Chapter 4).

- 2) The act of ICI was described as above except in a different aspect, where separate instances of interactions supporting the process of information transfer

occurred between students and their peers, or between individual students or groups of students and the teachers (for examples see illustrations and excerpts in ICI Categories B and C in Chapter 4).

3) The two previous acts of ICI were described, but additional aspects of ICI were also noted. The movement of ICI was described as two-directional, as ICI were also initiated from students. Two additional situations where ICI occurred outside the pattern of discussing the topic of the lesson emerged: the first were instances of class discussion between the teacher and students that occurred for the purpose of developing concepts rather than transferring information; and the second was the inclusion of students' outside experiences. Instances of OCI experiences perceived as supportive to the academic topic were described, and few short instances of OCI described as separate from the academic topic but considered as influential to students' learning were described as separate aspects of lesson experienced (for examples see illustrations and excerpts in ICI Categories C and D in Chapter 4, and OCI Category C in Chapter 5).

4) Instances of the ICI experiences described previously were also described here; however, the instances of discussions between students and teachers for the purpose of conceptual development were described more frequently, and were perceived as the primary type of ICI and a context for learning. Topics for ICI were centred on academic concepts and on learners' OCI experiences (for examples see illustrations and excerpts in ICI Categories D and E in Chapter 4, and OCI Categories C and D in Chapter 5).

From the variation in how ICI and OCI were described in lessons (as outlined above and presented in detail in Chapters 4 and 5 of the thesis), it is clear that ICI were described more frequently and in greater variation than OCI. This finding was not

unexpected, as ICI would be a necessary component of lessons taught in the L2, particularly when learners intend to undertake a degree in the L2 in countries where the L2 is spoken. These patterns of ICI have also been previously identified (see Section 4.1 regarding context of ICI and Sections 4.2 and 4.3 regarding patterns of ICI).

The emergence of OCI in teachers' descriptions of lessons is much less noted in publications, even in cases where topic control and topic initiation is a primary focus of linguistic studies (see Section 3.1.4.1 and Section 7.1.4), as most of these publications are concerned with describing the frequency and meaning of the spoken interaction observed, rather than identifying or differentiating ICI from OCI.

### ***8.3.2 EAP Teachers' Experiences of ICI and OCI Learning And Teaching In A Situated Lesson***

Differences in detail between how ICI and OCI were experienced emerged in a variety of ways across transcripts: 1) in how teachers viewed students' ability to interact inside and outside of the classroom (Section 7.3.1 and Appendices E.3- E.7); 2) in how these interactions emerged; ICI emerged naturally and consistently in descriptions of lessons (Section 4.3.3.2) whereas OCI descriptions were frequently prompted (Section 5.3.2.1 and Table 5.1) There were also variances in how these interactions were taught (Section 7.3.2). ICI often were often described in reference to the various methodologies described in the lessons (see Section 6.3.3 for Communicative methodologies and Section 6.3.5 for Task based teaching); however OCI were less frequently described and often peripherally implied through discussions of L2 use L1 use, and so on (see Tables 7.2.1.A and 7.2.1.B). There were also distinct differences in the ways that both phenomena were described ICI were most often

referred to through the use of professional teaching terms and in relation to teacher training however OCI were most often described as personal experiences and were described in narrative form (Tables 3.8 and 3.9).

### **8.3.2.1 Reflective Experiences**

When discussing the ICI and OCI as the focus of a teaching and learning situation there was also a difference in how the teachers associated their own beliefs of both phenomena to prior experiences. ICI were frequently associated with teachers' experiences in teacher training whereas OCI were more often associated with teachers' experiences as L2 learners (Section 7.5). One of the most significant differences between descriptions of both phenomena was in the detail provided in specific learning situations that occurred in the situated lessons. ICI emerged frequently as part of the process of learning and in descriptions of student learning and in relation to the object of learning in teachers descriptions (Appendix E.8). Teachers' descriptions of OCI in situated lessons were more frequently expressed in broader terms as generally beneficial to second language learning without specific detail. The exceptions to these general beliefs were the detailed accounts in those transcripts where more complex conceptions of OCI were most prominent.

### **8.3.3 Teachers' Role**

The importance of teachers' role was outlined in Chapter 2, Part A. In analysing the data in descriptions of ICI and OCI there was a distinct difference noted in how the teachers described their own role in the processes of teaching and learning in relation to how the interactions were conceived that were almost at opposite poles. The teachers' role in ICI situations was often described as active whereas in OCI the teachers' role



was less active as an encourager but the accountability for learning through OCI was described as the learners' initiative and responsibility. This variation was evident in a comparison of the data with findings published in a previous study reviewed in the thesis.

In Section 2.2.3) a single metaphorical study was located in the area of L2 teaching that attempted to better understand teachers' beliefs about themselves and learners in the classroom. In a follow-up publication of the initial results of teachers' metaphorical conceptualisations of teaching roles, De Guerrero and Villamil (2002) published a list of categorical descriptions based on the metaphors teachers used in response to general questions regarding how teachers perceived their role as ESL instructors: "Cooperative Leader," "Provider of Knowledge," "Challenger/Agent of Change," "Nurturer," "Innovator," "Provider of Tools," "Artist," "Repairer," And "Gym Instructor" (see Conceptual Categories, Table 1, pp. 104-105, and descriptions of De Guerrero's labels, pp. 102-113). Some of the terms the EAP teachers used in the Teacher's Beliefs Study to describe their role in the teaching of ICI and OCI could be categorised under these labels (see Chapter 7, Tables 7.9 and 7.10 for samples).

Across the group of 28 EAP teachers, their descriptions of role in situations where ICI was reported fit well with many of the labels listed in De Guerrero's study. For example, "I just lead them in the right direction" and "We learn together, we go on a journey" could be categorised under De Guerrero's label "Cooperative Leader." "I teach them how to write an answer" and "My job is to introduce the framework" could be placed under Guerrero's label "Provider of Knowledge." "My job lies in bringing the whole view together" could go under "Challenger/Agent of Change." And "Giving them background information" and "Providing a schematic or scaffolding framework" fits in well with the category "Provider of Tools." In contrast, the EAP teacher's

descriptions of role in situations where OCI was described were more limited: “I encourage them” (mentioned six times in the small sample in Table 7.10) or “I advise them or I think of ways they can ...” could be categorised under De Guerrero’s labels, “Gym Instructor” or “Nurturer” (see Appendix F.3).

#### ***8.3.4 Significance of Findings***

Calls for more information regarding L2 teachers’ perceptions of both phenomena were found in separate literature reviews for both the ICI and OCI study. The urgency for a better understanding of teachers’ conceptions of both phenomena was reported in the context of the increasing numbers of overseas students choosing to study in L2 countries (see Section 4.1 and Tables 4.11 and 4.12 for Australian statistics) and a better need to understand what L2 teachers understand and do. ICI has been a primary focus for a long time in L2 research (see Section 4.2). In contrast, OCI, though considered an influential component of L2 learning, has been investigated less frequently in empirical studies and is often mentioned in theories of learning and teaching in general terms (see Sections 5.1 and 5.2). To the best of my knowledge, research on teachers’ perceptions of OCI is a new form of inquiry in L2 research. The findings presented in the thesis that emerged from comparisons of EAP teachers’ descriptions of both interactions are significant in that they act as a first step in informing our understanding of L2 teachers’ conceptions of these ICI the relations between conceptions and the actions described also have important implications for teacher training.

## **8.4 Relations between Categories of Description: Experiences and Practice**

**I am still learning**

—Michelangelo

In the previous section the EAP teachers' distinctly different experiences with how teaching, learning, and the teachers' role were associated with each COD were considered. Comparisons of how teachers described learning and teaching across the hierarchical range of both categorical frameworks aligned closely with previous work that describes students' approaches to learning in a range of surface to deeper understandings of phenomena and teaching approaches that are thought to support these different learning approaches (see Section 2.2.5). These patterns of similarity and difference between the ICI COD and the OCI COD descriptions of learning emerged consistently across the group. There were also similar patterns in experiences of teaching practices reported. These findings are important as they provide specific insights into the influence of teachers' beliefs on practice.

### ***8.4.1 How Did EAP Attribute Prior Experiences Differently To ICI And OCI Descriptions Of Conceptions?***

In Section 8.3 differences in how the EAP teachers' attributed prior experience to the perceptions of ICI and OCI described in the interviews were discussed (for more detail review see Chapter 6) but there were also some significant similarities in patterns between the complexity of conceptions described of both ICI and OCI and the influence of situated prior experiences that influenced conceptions of learning and teaching that emerged across transcript that indicate these experiences and complexity of understandings of both phenomena are connected (see Figure 7.2 for illustrations of

categories for both phenomena across transcripts). Significantly descriptions of situations where teachers' described multiple opportunities to experience these interactions in a variety of ways emerged in those transcripts were more complete conceptions of both phenomena were most foremost in teachers' awareness during the situated lessons.

### **8.5 Relations Between Categories**

An unexpected development in the investigation was the relation described between conceptual development of both phenomena in situations where more complex conceptions of ICI and OCI were described. The contribution of these findings and developments to the current body of L2 research about L2 teachers' conceptions, the influence teachers' beliefs have on practice, and the ways that teachers develop a deeper understanding of phenomena, are discussed in this section.

In summary a comparison of COD for both phenomena indicates differences in teachers' awareness and how they described their own role as teachers, and differences in the quantity and quality of aspects of each phenomenon were found. Most importantly, the differences between how these two types of interactions were perceived, and the variation between how they were experienced by the teachers, appear to consistently relate to how these interactions were approached in classroom lessons. Reported practices across both the ICI and OCI frameworks illustrated not only similarities and differences in how the teachers across the group perceived ICI and OCI; but at a macro level, there appeared to be an evident pattern of conceptual development for both phenomena.

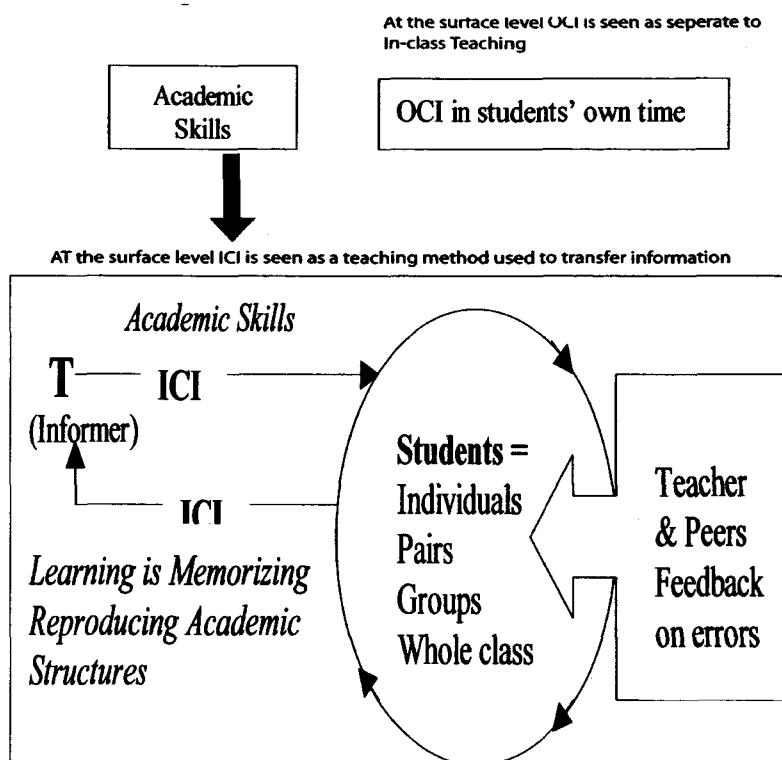
In the more limited or surface-level reports of ICI and OCI, both the teachers' conceptions of the interactions and the practices they reported in the studies appeared to

be disconnected. However, in the more developed or deeper-level reports of ICI and OCI, the teachers' conceptions of these interactions appeared to be much more closely related. These relations were shown initially in the illustrations of how ICI and OCI were described in teaching and learning in the situated lessons (see Chapters 4 and 5). That is, at a macro-level, when focusing on the movement of ICI and OCI in EAP teachers' descriptions of lessons in situations where more limited conceptions of ICI and OCI were described, the teaching practices adopted are thought to promote learners' surface approaches to learning.

#### ***8.5.1 Illustrations of ICI and OCI in Situated Lessons***

Illustrations of the role of interactions described in situated lessons of both phenomena have been put together to show the disconnectedness of ICI and OCI in these conceptions (see Figure 8.5). Teaching and learning in these situations was most often described showing the teacher providing information and the learning being assessed through the students' ability to reproduce these skills either in written or oral production (see Sections 4.6 and 5.4.1 for excerpts). In ICI categories of teaching where OCI were described as separate from the process of classroom teaching, these interactions are illustrated separately (see the upper right corner of Figure 8.5). The role of the teacher in situations where OCI were reported was most frequently described as "I encourage" (Table 7.10). The focus of student learning (or object of learning) was most frequently described as increasing students' ability to produce the academic skill and structures taught in class. ICI were viewed as a teaching method by which information was provided to the students and as one way that students were able to use to reproduce the information provided.

**Figure 8.5. Surface level ICI and OCI Conceptions and Teaching**



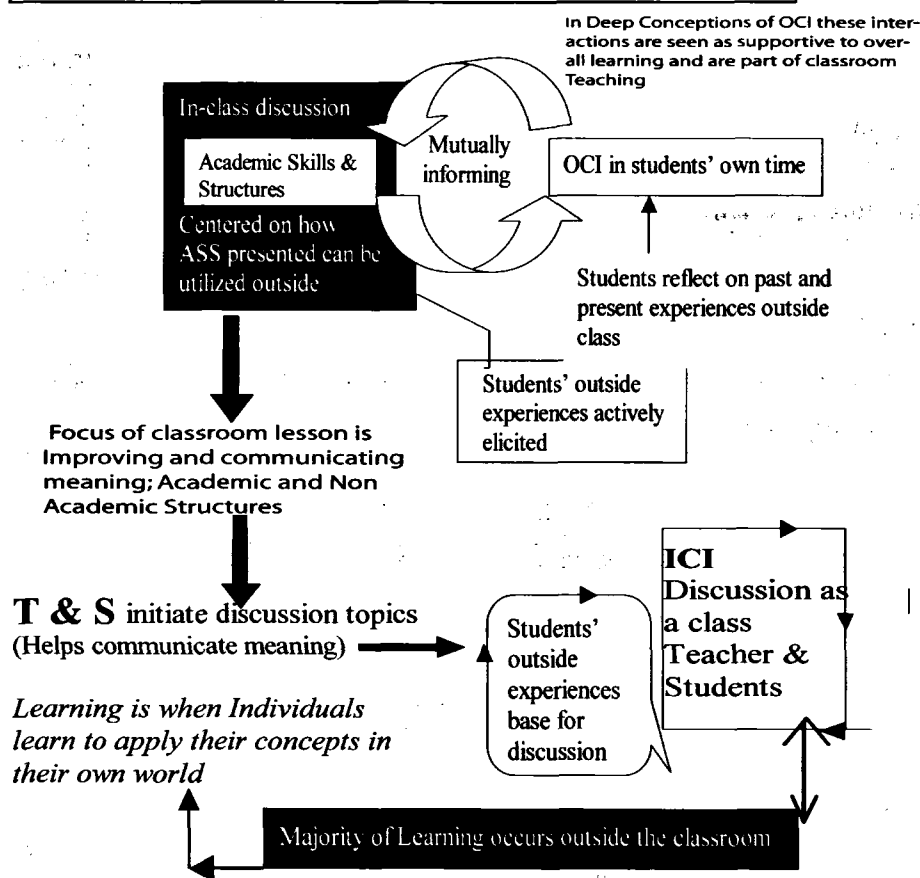
The movements of ICI were described (illustrated by arrows in Figure 8.5) as initiated by the teacher when presenting the information. The students were then frequently asked to work on the information presented (either individually, in pairs, or as a class) to practice the skill or structure provided; grouping was most often organized and managed by the teachers. Often the practice stage was indicated by the students' involvement in a "learning activity." In some situations this practice stage included a problem-solving task; in other situations students were looking for predetermined information; and in some situations students were expected to use the skills or structures presented to complete a task. The way that the practice stage was managed influenced the type of ICI that was expected. During this practice stage, the teacher and peers would provide feedback to students. The interaction that occurred

when feedback was provided (see callout box in the lower right area of Figure 8.5) was not usually described as predetermined.

The ICI that occurred during activities where students were grouped or paired (illustrated by circle in Figure 8.5) were sometimes described as monitored by the teacher who assisted the students during the practice process. Terms frequently used by teachers to describe their role during this situation were “facilitating, guiding or scaffolding” (Table 7.9). Once students had completed a task, there were often opportunities for the students to present their results to the rest of the class through written and oral presentations or testing. When assessment was described this usually was done by the teacher (indicated by ICI arrow returning to informer, in Figure 8.5).

In contrast, those teachers describing more complex conceptions of ICI and OCI consistently reported adopting teaching approaches that are believed to support learners’ deeper approaches to learning and that align closely with the hierarchical categories of description for teaching and learning of teachers and learners of other subject areas in a university context (Marton, et al., 1993; Prosser, et al., 1994). This is a very important finding because it illustrates that complex conceptual development of both phenomena are not only related, but may have an impact on what it is that teachers do. The illustrations of teaching practices reported in situations where more complex conception of ICI and OCI were described (Illustration 5.5.1D and Illustration 4.5D) were combined to visually illustrate the relationship between both phenomena where at a macro level the movement of these interactions were described as connected (Figure 8.6).

**Figure 8.6. Deep level ICI and OCI Conceptions and Teaching**



In sharp contrast to descriptions of disconnection between ICI and OCI that emerged and informed the illustrations of more limited conceptions of ICI and OCI (see Figure 8.5), these phenomena were described as “the context of learning” and were perceived as connected in situations where more complete conceptions of ICI and OCI were described. When either students or teachers introduced OCI and ICI topics in the situated lessons described by the EAP teachers (illustrated by the letters “T” and “S” in the lower left corner of Figure 8.6), topics of discussion were often based on or informed by students’ outside experiences. In descriptions of ICI in the situated lesson, teachers described the content of materials used in lessons as academic skills and structures; this description of materials was consistent across the group of teachers. The



focus of the class or object of learning was described quite differently than when more limited conceptions of ICI and OCI emerged; in those the focus was the “teaching of academic skills and structures” (see focus of teaching, upper left box in Figure 8.5). In the more complex descriptions of ICI and OCI the object of learning was frequently described as “sharing and developing the students’ ideas” and “linking the academic structures presented with the L2 learner’s outside world.”

My job is to introduce the framework they process their own recollections (OCI experiences) (Table 7.9)

My job is to help them develop concepts but not actually impose my ideas (Table 7.9)

My job lies in bringing the whole view together (Table 7.9)

I link what is learnt to what is out there (Table 7.10)

In the excerpts above, the role of the teacher is to assist the students in constructing meaning through developing and building their own concepts. A perception that the majority of learning occurred outside of class was also described (illustrated at the bottom of Figure 8.6). The view that ICI and OCI were the context of learning was illustrated in descriptions of ICI teaching and learning where the connection between these interactions was that they were mutually informing: learners’ in-class experiences informed outside learning, and outside experiences informed in-class learning (the movement of interactions in the learning and teaching processes is illustrated by parallel arrows in Figure 8.6). Learning is perceived as successful when students are able to apply developed concepts to the outside world. In these descriptions the flow of ICI and OCI is circular: learning is viewed as a continual process, informed through the sharing of ideas and experiences both inside and outside the classroom. These descriptions of teaching and learning fit well with descriptions of

approaches to teaching and learning believed to support deeper levels of understanding (as outlined in Table 4.5.1).

**8.6 Investigative Approaches: Strengths and Limitations**

The strengths of the investigative approaches used in the Teachers’ Beliefs Study lies in the structure and flexibility that the application of mixed methods provided in collecting and analysing data that emerged (see Section 3.1.3). The use of phenomenographic methods allowed for a situated focus of EAP teachers’ perceptions of two phenomena within a specific context. The phenomenographic structure provided opportunity for in-depth exploration of the variation in experiences described in relation to ICI and OCI that in turn resulted in the identification and description of two categorical frameworks.

The use of ethnographic methods allowed for additional exploration into the prior experiences that emerged across the transcripts that were not specifically related to the teaching and learning that occurred in the lessons but were described by the teachers as influential to how they perceived and approached these interactions in the situated lesson and were therefore a factor that required further consideration. The application of ethnographic methods helped to provide a more holistic picture of the teachers’ experiences and perceptions of ICI and OCI further the findings lend support to the stability of the categorical frameworks in two ways: 1) Similarities in patterns and variation in types of prior experiences described paralleled those patterns of conceptual complexity that emerged phenomenographically, and 2) The list of a combination of multiple prior experiences described in the six transcripts (see conclusion of Chapter 7) where higher order categories of both phenomena emerged provides significant support for the phenomenographic tenet that an increase in ways

that various parts of a phenomenon are discerned leads to a deeper understanding of the phenomena.

The application of additional qualitative methods such as counting the instances that various teaching methodologies were mentioned (see Graphs 6.3.3, 6.3.4, 6.3.5) and exploring the different ways teachers described both phenomena (see Table 6.2.4 for narrative descriptions and Table 6.2.3 for the use of professional teaching terms) again provided additional insight into how the phenomena were perceived and approached in situated lessons. Similarly quantitative counts and comparisons of data provided a different analytical perspective on the data with visual illustrations providing insight into the various ways both ICI and OCI were perceived (see EAP teachers' awareness of student ability in response to direct questions in Chart 7.1) and also indicating the limitations of descriptions provided in individual excerpts through measurements of distribution across the group (see Chart 7.2 for an example).

There were also limitations to the investigative approaches used. One of these was that the ICI and OCI COD were based on teachers' descriptions; no observations of lessons took place (see Section 8.1.1 for details). Also the COD were developed from data provided in the teachers' own words however the categorisation of these descriptions was interpreted by the researcher. Thus while extreme care was used to describe things from the teachers' perspectives as much as possible the researcher's own perceptions of the concepts as a whole were part of the categorisation process. Another limitation of the investigation was the lack of explicit knowledge of the participants' specific teacher training and teaching experiences. Only eight participants returned the questionnaire (see Appendix A.2). Although no correlation between these variables was indicated, these variables should be documented and compared in future studies. I would suggest that in collecting this data in written form the most appropriate

time might be soon after the interviews but not directly before as this might increase anxiety in participants with less teaching experience or directly after the interview as what was described might influence the type of experiences reported. In the follow-up questionnaires sent out in the Teachers' Beliefs Study the experiences of learning a L2 were described differently in written and oral forms thus in future research with a larger number of both forms of data these differences should also be considered.

### **8.7 ICI and OCI in L2 Teaching and Learning Literature**

This section considers the contribution of the investigation to the body of current knowledge about the role of in and out-of-class interactions in L2 teaching and learning. The Teacher Beliefs Study was in many ways a new type of exploration in the field of L2 research therefore it is not possible to build on former L2 theory. However, some of the findings that resulted from the investigations were supported in a variety of ways by current understandings that have arisen from different areas of L2 research. Theoretically the consistent inclusion of ICI in the teachers' descriptions of learning and teaching fits in with descriptions of learning from the social-constructivist perspective, the significance placed on prior experiences mirrors the significance given these experiences from a cognitivist perspective and how these experiences are perceived by the individual that experiences them fits in with the "individual constructivist perspective (see Section 2.1.2 for detail on these theoretical perspectives). Theories of language development (reviewed in Section 2.1.2.1) did not arise explicitly in the teachers' descriptions. However two points highlighted in Krashen's work that the focus of learning be placed on the learner not on the teacher and that the language learning occurs when the learner engages in meaningful interactions (Section 2.1.2.2) were two general perceptions of OCI and language

learning that emerged across transcripts. The prominence of communicative language teaching and task based teaching methods that were described in the situated lessons in relation to ICI concurs with the prevalence of these methodologies described in the L2 literature (Section 2.1.4). Therefore aspects of the findings presented in this thesis fit well with certain aspects of what is presently known about L2 learning in the literature.

The investigative processes of the Teachers' Beliefs Study as well as the findings presented are supported and situated with other well known investigative processes in the field of L2 research that focus on these factors from different perspectives (see Figure A.2). More importantly however the identification of a pattern of conceptions across a group of teachers and the importance of prior teaching and learning experiences are significant to our current understanding of L2 teachers' conceptions and have been supported by recent studies of L2 teachers' conceptions of other phenomena (for a detailed overview of these studies see Section 2.14). The findings described in the ICI framework in particular are well situated within other recently published studies where L2 teachers' conceptions, classroom discourse and classroom practices were primary factors (see Section 7.1.4).

## **8.8 Further Research**

The investigation presented in this thesis was a continual exploration of factors that emerged as significant from the teachers' perspective. An immediate investigation that can be done from data that emerged in the Teachers' Beliefs Study is a comparison of the ICI COD and OCI COD with the detailed descriptions of teaching methodologies that emerged across transcripts. Such an investigation may assist in informing our understanding of the concepts that lie behind the teaching approaches used in EAP lessons. Additional research into the generalisability of the COD is also needed. This

could be done using a survey or questionnaire form distributed to a large population of teachers in similar contexts. The feedback from teachers on the categories would assist in modifying these categories so that stable frameworks could be developed that would be a highly useful research and education tool for teacher training and development in other more broadly similar context in other countries. One of the most exciting applications for the COD would be in developing learning groups as outlined in Section 8.2. Teachers would be given the descriptions and asked to share their own experiences with ICI and OCI in specific learning and teaching situations with other teachers. Thus in a collaborative way teachers would be providing other teachers with the opportunities to reflect and experience different aspects of these interactions which would not only benefit the teachers' understandings of these interactions but would provide different insights on how to approach the teaching and learning of these interactions in the classroom context.

## **8.9 Conclusion**

The findings described in this thesis have centred on the development of a framework that describes the different ways a group of teachers described ICI and OCI in situated lessons and the resulting categorisation and descriptions of the conceptions that emerged. The identification of two sets of conceptions that appear to be stable through a variety of analytical processes is highly significant in that previous COD developed in other educational areas have proven to be generalisable to broadly similar contexts. In other words the number of categories might be adjusted and descriptions reframed to fit particular contexts but the overall framework outlines a conceptual developmental process that should be stable in similar contexts where the learning purpose of the lessons and the proficiency of the students are similar. Therefore it is

expected that these COD not only inform our current understanding but can act as a framework that can be used to inform future explorations into L2 teachers' conceptions of these ICI and OCI. Comparisons of these COD and analysis of descriptions of teaching and learning related to these categories along with the significance of individual findings have been detailed in those sections where the findings were presented and will not be reiterated here.

This thesis presents three key messages. The first is the information that has been provided on teachers' conceptions of OCI that have not been previously explored. The findings suggest that these interactions were not considered to be part of the learning and teaching processes described in situated classes by a large percentage of a group of EAP teachers that are quite representative of the Australian L2 teacher population (see Section 3.2.2.1). This is closely aligned with literature on teaching populations in other L2 language contexts in countries where the teaching of overseas students at the tertiary level is a large and growing industry (see Section 1.2.2 and Tables 4.11 and 4.22). There is also significant evidence that conceptions of OCI and ICI are related, that is a complex understanding of one phenomenon may not be developed without an understanding of the other. These findings have important implications for those organisations, researchers, learners and educators involved in the field of second language teaching and learning.

The second message is more optimistic, that some of the teachers involved in the process of L2 teaching and learning describe complex understandings of OCI and ICI, which have provided a window on how these conceptions developed. The multiple opportunities to look at various aspects of these phenomena are highly significant. The process of reflection on specific phenomena and bringing these phenomena to a focal

awareness appears to be highly influential in developing deeper understandings of factors known to be important to the process of learning and teaching a second language. These findings replicate what is being reported in other educational fields on teaching and learning and should be closely considered by those who are involved in L2 teacher training and teacher development.

The third message is the importance of what Woods describes as a new way of thinking about teacher thinking (1996). This study supports findings that have recently been described and replicated in L2 teacher cognition research and have a longer history in other educational fields. Teachers' conceptions of factors related to learning and teaching are influential to the process of learning and teaching and the body of research evidence that these conceptions influence practice is growing. This implies that former theories describing teachers' conceptions as uniquely individual and highly resistant to change and thus not generalisable are not completely accurate.

In fact from this new perspective although an individual's conception of a phenomenon is related to how the phenomenon has been experienced by the individual, groups of people are experiencing different aspects of the same phenomenon. Thus in exploring these different aspects educators and researchers can begin to understand the different ways these phenomena are perceived. A large body of research coming out of education, medicine and science indicates that the numbers of ways phenomena are conceived across a group are limited. This new way of looking at and exploring teacher thinking through using phenomenographic and other research tools currently available is exciting and has revolutionary implications for L2 teacher research and the L2 teaching field in general.

The desirability of this new way of thinking about L2 teaching has already been demonstrated by what teachers are asked to understand about learners. As Bransford,



Brown, and Cocking (1999c) argue, expertise in particular teaching areas involves more than general teaching skills; it also requires a well-organized knowledge of concepts that teachers need to begin looking at the qualitatively different ways learners experience learning (pp. 15-16). This thesis argues that a parallel understanding of teachers' experiences is also necessary that this knowledge can help teacher trainers and researchers to focus on pedagogical content of what influences teachers' approaches to teaching and learning rather than teachers' knowledge of specific teaching methods or subject matter.