Students' spontaneous smile in EFL classroom interaction[1]

Daniela Gomes de Araújo Nóbrega*

Abstract

This article discusses the importance of the students' spontaneous smile in EFL classroom interaction, and its implication on their oral production. Findings proved that the students' spontaneous smile served as a fundamental interactive nonverbal sign for it not only favors a closer relation among students, but also helps them in the co-construction of oral activities in group works. In sum, the students' spontaneous smile appeared to be a nonverbal indicative of proximity and of increasing oral interaction among them.

Key words: EFL classroom interaction, learners' smile, oral production.

Introduction

In conversations, a simple gaze can reveal either a sensation of pleasure or disgust. Nonverbal signs, as part of the process of human communication, can reveal different types of communicative meanings through gestures, eye contact, facial expressions and body language. What someone does while talking might strongly sign his/her personal feelings much more than what is verbally expressed. Talking with a work colleague with crossed arms and a steady position, for example, might sign the person's discomfort on the topic discussion or the person's desire to talk about something different at that time. The way people look at each other and sign their body movements in conversations can be known as nonverbal indicatives of complementing or contradicting the exchanged messages among interlocutors in face-to-face interactions.

According to Pennycook (1985), our bodies constantly convey functional meanings in any interaction, and are always coordinated with the spoken language, providing contextual cues to the interlocutor-

*   Professora da Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, João Pessoa-PB, Brasil.
    Email: gomesnobrega@hotmail.com

-listener-interpreter in the task of understanding what the interlocutor-
-speaker has said before. For instance, direct eye contact can signal
attentiveness followed by the head movements during interactive en-
counters. And, while downcast eyes may represent respect in Eastern
cultures, the eye contact might signal misunderstandings during face-
-to-face encounters in Western cultures.

Touching, one of the nonverbal elements in human commu-
nication, varies functional meanings according to specific culture
(Pennycook, 1985). For example, while in some cultures touching can
be regarded as acceptable in public domains, for others it is not accep-
table. For North Americans, touching friends during conversations can
be considered normal, but for Japanese people the act of touching in
social encounters can be conceived as impolite behavior. Pennycook
(1985) sustains that we express ourselves more with body movements
than with words. Nonverbal signs are used with the spoken language
in order to complement the functional meanings of the whole human
communication. Similar to Pennycook's comments, both Santos (2007)
and Gregersen (2001) have asserted that the teachers' nonverbal signs
tend to substitute, contradict, explain or monitor their verbal behavior
during classroom interactions. For this reason, the nonverbal feature
of communication needs to be considered with caution as they are de-
pendent on individual, contextual and cultural factors in the process of
understanding and interpreting messages in social interactions.

One of the categories that have received attention in nonverbal
studies has been the Paralanguage. Pennycook (1985) asserts that para-
language refers to all aspects of nonverbal communication and is used
in a broad sense. This author refers to paralanguage as the paraverbal
features which constitute kinesics, proxemics and the paraverbal fea-
tures (the vocally-produced sounds). They both serve to complement
or emphasize the spoken language. Whatever the nonverbal type of
resource used in conversations, the nonverbal elements have specific
interactive and communicative functions (Dantas, 2007; Santos; Acio-
li; Oliveira; Souza, 2007). Under the communicative perspective, the
nonverbal elements can both express peoples' intentions and personal
feelings. Also, these signs can influence or modify another interlocu-
tors' nonverbal behavior in response to what they hear and see in con-
versational episodes.

Taking these theoretical perspectives about nonverbal behavior in classroom interactions into account, this article analyzes the students' facial expression, the smile in EFL classroom to discuss its interactive meanings during oral tasks. Although it is well known among the nonverbal specialists that nonverbal signs often accompany the verbal signs in conversations to complement or contradict the spoken language (PENNYCOOK, 1985; DANTAS, 2007; ACIOLI; OLIVEIRA; SOUZA, 2007), I narrowed down the analysis for the students' smile as it was the most recurrent nonverbal sign during classroom interactions, and which showed different interactional meanings in classroom interaction during the oral tasks.

Therefore, the objective of this article is threefold. First of all, I discuss relevant research on nonverbal behavior in classroom interaction. Second, I explain the types of smile (DAVIES, 1979; RECTOR & TRINTA, 1993; EKMAN, 2003; FREITAS-MAGALHÃES, 2004). Finally, I analyze the Duchenne students' spontaneous smile in an EFL classroom environment at college level and its learning implication to their speech production.

1 NONVERBAL ELEMENTS IN CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Conversation normally takes place when at least two people are talking, be that in a face-to-face encounter or in telephone or in any internet resources such as in Messenger (MSN), Skype, Facebook or Orkut. In face-to-face encounters, talking is not just to open the mouth and spread out words. It is much more than this (WARDHAUGH, 1998). It also involves the use of body language, that is to say, when we are talking we usually make use of gestures, eye contact, smile, hand and head movements to confirm or not what we attempt to express orally. These nonverbal signs are invariably present while we communicate in many instances of social interaction. This same communicative procedure occurs in the classroom context. The use of gestures in the classroom context, for example, is also present when teacher and learners are interacting and/or the students are talking to themselves. With this argument in mind, it was through the studies involving Conversational Analysis (MARCUSCHI, 1991; ARMENGAUD, 2006; KERBRAT-ORECCHIONI,

2006) that the classroom has been regarded as a place whereby the implications about the teaching and learning of EFL stem from classroom interaction.

Based on the teachers' discursive practices, studies have demonstrated that T's nonverbal actions normally complement in meaning and in functionality T's speech (DANTAS, 2007; OLIVEIRA, 2007; SANTOS, 2007; SOUZA, 2007). That is to say, T's nonverbal elements provide a valuable interactive function in classroom discourse–contributing both to EFL classroom interaction and to the teaching and learning processes as a whole. T's nonverbal signs attempt to reinforce and orient his/her speech, facilitating the students' learning, indicating T's reactions in relation to the students' behavior (LORSCHER, 2003; SOUZA, 2007; SIME, 2008) and promoting a funny learning atmosphere (DANTAS, 2007).

Having an interest in the relation between Textual Linguistics and Pedagogical Discourse, Maria Francisca Oliveira Santos (2007) organized a book entitled *Os Elementos verbais e não verbais no discurso em sala de aula*. The aim was to explore the nonverbal elements in the pedagogical discourse such as gestures, head movements and facial expressions. Grounded in the interactional-pragmatic perspective, Santos (2007) and other scholars analyzed the relation between nonverbal and verbal elements of classroom discourse, giving priority to the nonverbal ones focusing on their implication to the process of teaching and learning as a whole.

The study of T's gestures has been mostly observed by reference to T's pedagogical intentions during classroom interaction. Souza (2007) examined the relation between T's gestures and his/her oral discourse to see whether they maintain an interactive relation between T and the students or not. Ten lessons of the Science discipline, from the 6th grade of the elementary school, from public and private schools in Maceió, Alagoas were observed. Souza (2007) advocates the importance of gestures in the process of oral communication, since they prove to be of fundamental interactive value to facilitate and orient the reading of T's speech.

The correspondence between what is said and what is nonverbally performed by the T can be seen in other studies, emphasizing the role of T's gestures in many classroom instances. According to Acioli

(2007), Santos (2007) and Souza (2007), the expressive gestures are illustrated when they provide an interactive support to the class content, to regulate, to translate the word meanings and organize the pedagogical discourse as a way to facilitate the students' comprehension during class explanations. For example, T's hand movements are used to emphasize oral explanations or to control the students' behavior during the classes (Acioli, 2007).

Other studies have discussed the expressive value of T's gestures by reference to the students' perceptions, i.e. the students' perceptions of T's gestures. Lorscher (2003) observed T's nonverbal signs in schools in Germany, in 1972 and 1994, and stressed that the learners tend to interpret T's gestures correctly. According to the students, T's gestures tend to be used to provide positive feedback, to highlight information and to replace the verbal elements when the lexemes are unknown by them. This particularly occurs with a high intensity at the beginner level and within phases in which fictitious communication takes place, i.e. in moments of role play when learners are expected to act out a story. With more advanced learners, the amount of T's gestures tends to be reduced.

One particular nonverbal element in T's discourse that has conveyed different functional meanings is the smile. Dantas (2007), for example, reflected upon how T's smile could contribute to EFL learning in an English Classroom at the extension school of English from the Federal University of Alagoas. Believing that verbal and nonverbal types of behavior cannot be studied separately, one complementing another for the understanding of human communication as a whole, Dantas (2007) examined T's smile by reference to what she did and said in the classroom. With this argument in mind, Dantas (2007) found out that the smile was used: (1) to increase classroom interaction through a convivial strategy (a balance between the instructional and the spontaneous discourse); (2) to promote a fun learning environment therefore favoring students learning; (3) and to reprimand students (exerting power and saving face) for not doing their homework. Although her work emphasized the influence of T's smile on EFL learning, she could also notice that T's smile helped lower the affective filter between T and students, favoring an increasing amount of oral interaction between them.

T's smile could also be noticed as a responsive mechanism of both T and students' actions in classroom interaction. Lewis (2005) and Sime (2008) observed that T's smile tends to appear when they provide positive feedback to the learners' output. The smile turns out to be a sign of approval of the students' answers and/or comments. On the other hand, the smile could be seen in regard to the students' reaction to some of T's verbal behavior. Lewis (2005) noticed that the female students often smile more than the male students after the T's joke, when others say funny stories, and during pair work.

Along with the expressive eye contact, T's smile can provide different pedagogical objectives according to different interactive moments in the classroom. Oliveira (2007) observed T's smile to describe its functional meanings between T and students' interaction. Two types of smile were noticed. The first smile could be regarded as a manifestation of enjoyment, that is, a true smile. This smile was observed during interactive moments when the T agrees with the students' answers or in moments that deal with jokes. It was, then, often displayed during informal interaction among T and students. The second smile could be seen as a polite instrument of social contact that could be named as a social smile. Such a smile could be observed in interactive moments in which the T gives a reprimand or when he/she disagrees with some student's comment.

The study of smiles in classroom interaction can also reflect its cultural meaning from the perspective of a specific community. Bohn (2004) investigated how Japanese smile culture influences Japanese students' participation in an ESL classroom. Through a questionnaire to students and classroom observation, the author found out that the smile serves as a sign of politeness or a kind of etiquette among the students, and between the students and the teacher. Also, the smile tends to be used to protect privacy, to show interest, to appear friendly and to listen carefully. In protecting privacy, the smile is often managed as a way to prevent showing the personal feelings on the event itself. For example, when asked if they understood the lesson or not, Japanese students tend to smile instead of expressing their sensations verbally. The smile is, thus, replaces the verbal signs as a way to signal a lack of desire to orally participate in classes.

Taking into account what was pinpointed by the scholars in this article, EFL classroom interaction is meant to be the result of T and students' joint efforts for accomplishing an effective learning and teaching environment for students' foreign language oral production. In relation to the students' smile, this study argues that such a nonverbal sign may contribute to increase or not the students' oral production, depending on the interactive moments it is displayed in the classroom and to accomplish specific interactive purposes (Marcuschi, 1991; Koch, 2006).

The analysis of students' smile emerged as a responsive mechanism of T's speech, and could also be seen as contextualization cues (Gumperz, 1982) in T and students' interactions and among the students. As a contextualization cue, the students' smile is seen as a signaling mechanism of contextual inferences or presuppositions. To understand the interactive meaning behind one student's smile, we should understand under what context the smile is displayed, how semantic content is related to the smile and which sentences precede or follow the smile within the talk units.

2 Types of smile

Expressed conscious or unconsciously, the smiling expression is often associated with human emotions. Besides, its meanings can only be understood in the light of the interactive event in which it is inserted. That is to say, it can only be interpreted by reference of who produces it, of who receives it and of the contextual information that surrounds its realization (Ekman, 2003; Freitas-Magalhães, 2004). For example, let us suppose that a five-year old naughty boy received a severe complaint from his mother after having broken a porcelain vase in the dining room. His sister was watching the scene giving a smile. While this boy manifested an ashamed facial expression due to his mother's complaint, his sister smiled at him as if she was criticizing his behavior. In Ekman's words (2003, p. 210), this sister's smile "[…] acknowledges unenjoyable emotions; it shows you are a good sport, that you can take the criticism and still smile about it".

The first typology of the smile came from Duchenne de Boulogne's study of facial expressions "by electrically stimulating di-

fferent parts of the face and photographing the resulting muscular contractions" (EKMAN, 2003, p. 204-205). Based on research in a Psychiatry clinic, this French neurologist found out "how true enjoyment smile differs from all of the nonenjoyment smiles" (EKMAN, 2003, p. 204) by observing the way(s) each facial muscle changes people's appearance.

According to his findings, Duchenne asserted that there are involuntary and voluntary smiles. The involuntary smile involves the movement of the zygomaticus muscle near the mouth and the obicularis muscle which is near the eyes. This smile reveals a true smile as "it is only brought into play by a true feeling, by an agreeable emotion" (EKMAN, 2003, p. 205-206). Because of his definition, Ekman calls the true smile of enjoyment a Duchenne smile (EKMAN, 2003).

In turn, the voluntary smile can also be known as the polite smile, yellow smile or masked smile, as shown in the example of the first paragraph. This type of smile is voluntary since it often appears "[…] when people do not feel enjoyment of any kind […]" (EKMAN, 2003, p. 204) or, in Duchenne's words, "unmasks a false friend" (EKMAN, 2003, p. 206). That is why the voluntary smile does not show a real meaning as it represents a mask to hide any unfavorable feeling, emotion or to avoid worry and sadness to others. The Japanese people, for example, tend to smile even when a relative dies. For them, smiling is not a matter of affective insensibility but a way to prevent their sadness to others (RECTOR & TRINTA, 1993).

Another typology of smile is based on the functions it assumes in different interactive events and social contexts. According to Freitas-Magalhães (2006), the smiling expression presents three functions. First, the smile appears in the expressions of emotions and interpersonal attitudes. Second, it is related to the sending of meaningful signs in any ongoing social interaction. And third, it indicates typical aspects of the individual personality. Although the smile has been defined as an affective and social reaction to external stimulus, it suffers meaningful alterations grounded on cultural patterns and experiences of social interactions.

For this reason, this author categorized the smile in five types: the primitive, the reflex, the exogenous, the instrumental and the coordinated smile. The primitive smile is shown in the answers to the neurobiological excitements and does not represent relation to the outside world. Such behavior can be noticed during the period in which the

baby is sleeping, only the mouth and face move. This neurological dimension of the smile might determine the beginning of the child smile development (Freitas-Magalhães, 2006). The reflex, or endogenous smile, can be regarded as instinctive. The baby smiles using all muscles of the face, characterizing the beginning of the smile morphology. Such endogenous smile is the result of the internal brain operations, notably seen in the babies, with no external interference for its realization.

The exogenous smile manifests a relation to the outside stimulus. This smile is regarded as an effective response to outside actions and/or sayings. Being socially used as a conduct and strategy of affection, the exogenous smile favors affective proximity among the participants. It is the smile of flirting. This smile can be seen when a man flirts with a woman for the first time, and uses such a smile to show his affective interest in her. The instrumental smile can be managed at interactive moments for intentional purposes. For example, smiling in political circumstances may indicate a friendly mechanism for asking for votes as if the candidates were saying 'If I smile people will find me friendly'. In turn, the coordinated organizational smile appears when the social smile has been already established. This smile reflects the individual's attitudinal mechanism when linked with a happy tone of voice (Freitas-Magalhães, 2006).

Anchored by the scholars' typologies and definitions of smile previously mentioned, I stress in this study the important interactive function the smile plays in EFL classroom interaction. What is behind the students' smile? Which meanings does the students' smile inform in different class events? And which contextual factors were responsible for the realization of the students' smile in different interactive moments? Motivated by these questions, I intend to discuss in this article the importance of the students' spontaneous smile in EFL classroom interaction and its learning implication to oral production.

3 Methodology

This study participants were one teacher and fourteen students (semester 2008.1), and eighteen students (2008.2) of the English Language 1 course - Letters Program, - State University of Paraiba (UEPB), in Campina Grande, Paraiba.

Since this study focused on face-to-face interaction in the classroom context, the conversation analysis (CA) was the basis of the analysis used for data transcription. According to the objectives that CA holds and the principles that underlie the qualitative research, three aspects need to taken into account for the analysis: (1) the contextual information, i.e. what actually happens in the event itself; (2) the interlocutors' characteristics, i.e. their social and cultural background; (3) the interlocutors' communicative strategies, i.e. the verbal and nonverbal elements used throughout the interactive encounter (SACKS, SCHEGLOFF & JEFFERSON, 1978; MARCUSCHI, 1991; GOFFMAN, 2002; ARMENGAUD; KERBRAT-ORECCHIONNI, 2006). Hence, CA employs ethno methodology techniques as to describe all the procedures, activities and methods the individuals employ in oral interactions.

According to the Ethno methodologists, the term 'description' means to observe-and-report the world around them. As Coulon (2005) explains, " if I describe a scene of my daily life, it does not mean that I explain the world in the light of the ethno methodologists, but in doing it, my description makes the world, it constructs the world" (my translation). Therefore, there are four principles which guided this work: 1. There was an initial contact to find out the area and the people taking part; 2. the analysis is holistic as it is believed that human behavior is connected to specific contexts in order to fulfill certain objectives; 3. the analysis deals with description since it describes the reality as it is; 4. the research is based on the participants' viewpoint of the social reality (WARDHAUGH, 1998; COULON, 2005).

As the *corpus* of conversation analysis comes from interactive sequences of natural occurrence, "the data consists of tape-recording and transcriptions of conversation" (LEVINSON, 1983, p. 326). In Levinson words,

> […] CA methodology is based on three basic procedures (a) collecting recurrent patterns in the data, and hypothesizing sequential expectations based on these; (b) showing that such sequential expectations actually are oriented to by participants; and (c) showing that, as a consequence of such expectations, while some organizational problems are resolved, others are actually created, for which further organizations will be required.

4 Students' smile in efl classroom interaction

Even though the smiling expression is mostly recognized as an enjoyable facial expression (Ekman, 2003), its meaning is context-sensitive since it takes a full account of the individual's affective and personality traits during social interactions. The students' smile in this work accounts for their personal feelings and attitudes in relation to what happens when interacting with their classmates and with T. Their smile, therefore, tends to be an interactive result of what occurs in different class events. This is due to the fact that smiling depends on the contextual factors in which it occurs and on what social and interactional motivation it is based. According to specific contexts for its realization, we can identify different types of smile (Freitas-Magalhães, 2006) which includes their communicative, informative and interactional meanings (Ekman and Friensen, 1969).

In this study, the students' smile was the nonverbal object of investigation in classroom interaction. Due to its frequent occurrence in classroom interaction, the students' smile indicated different interactional and informative meanings depending on the class activity they were involved in and the interactive moments in which they were inserted whether with their classmates or with T. These interactional meanings, in which the students' smile appeared, served as fundamental aspects for a better reading of the learning implications in relation to their speech production.

5 Students' spontaneous smile

Throughout the study, I noticed two types of smile expressed by the students in different interactive class moments. One of them was often used in group activities among students when fulfilling an oral task established by T: the Duchenne smile, the one this article draws attention to. Either discussing grammatical exercises or making up stories based on previous class activities, the students' smile appeared as a facial expression denoting the students' joint engagement in the co-construction of knowledge during oral activities. This smile can be defined as the Duchenne smile or the spontaneous smile (Ekman, 2003). It

was, thus, through the Duchenne smile that students' speech production seemed to increase more.

The students' Duchenne smile was not only noticed in group activities, but also in funny class moments. This episode could be seen during classroom observations, especially in the very first semester 2008.1. Particularly at the outset of classes, T tended to use some jokes to break the ice between herself and the students. For example, in one class moment, before explaining the use of past tenses, T said: "I've got two dictionaries for those who need them. So, I charge 10,00 reais to each 30-minute use". After this, everyone laughed and I could perceive, from that moment on, a more relaxed classroom atmosphere. This time was designed for a written exercise whose objective was to review past verb tenses. This T's verbal behavior was often encountered in her classes, particularly before an explanation of a grammar point or of an oral task.

However, it was mainly in group activities that the students' Duchenne smile could be noticed more. In one of the class moments, the students were oriented to create a final story about the teacher Mr. Thackeray's professional future, based on the movie 'To Sir, with Love', by James Clavell, that had been watched in the previous class. T organized the students in groups of three or four to make up an interesting story about Mr. Thackeray's professional future. In the film, the teacher faced awkward difficulties successfully when dealing with high school students from a public institution and, because of that, he decided on continuing teaching. The group activity was for students to elaborate another ending for the teacher Mr. Thackeray. T, then, gave them approximately 30 minutes to create a final story.

While students were interacting with each other to accomplish that group activity, I noticed that the students' smile differed from group to group. In one group, one student was writing while another was giving the information. In another, one student smiled while orienting his classmates on the task (this student seemed to have a more advanced level as he spoke more fluently). And in another group, the case of image 1 shown below, all students smiled while sharing ideas for the creation of the story.

Figure 1. Students' Duchenne smile

At first sight, the students' smile could denote enjoyment in that oral interaction, as shown in Figure 1. Everyone was smiling and seemed to be relaxed with one another. Probably because of this context of interaction, the oral task was being accomplished having all students joining in the efforts and sharing ideas for the creation of their story. According to Ekman and Friesen (1969), when there is a shared nonverbal behavior in conversational episodes in that one nonverbal behavior influences or modifies another, there is the case of interactive meaning.

The interactive meaning of nonverbal behavior could also be recognized through the individuals' body movements. Along with the smile, the students' body movements tended to reflect their individuals' personality traits and personal attitudes in the interaction. As seen in image 1, while the students smiled, the arms movements accompanied it. As noticed throughout research, there were some extroverted students in the classroom which tended to behave differently from those who were timid. Such attitudinal behavior could have indicated the students' tendency to speak more or less in class activities. Depending on their individual personality trait, the students appeared to show a high or low tendency in relation to their oral production in oral tasks. In image 1, the two students who moved their arms while talking were the extroverted ones. Only one who did not move his arms tended to present himself as a timid student throughout research.

With arms crossed, the head quite often in a down position and avoiding eye contact with his classmates, these nonverbal signs came along with a timid smile by one of the students. Although such nonverbal attitude indicates a more polite smile (FREITAS-MAGALHÃES, 2006), it seems here that this student also shared the feeling of satisfaction with other classmates from his own manner. Although having a pre--intermediate level of proficiency, this student was constantly motivated by the other two to add his ideas to the story creation. Probably, this motivational attitude could help the timid student to be more confident, leading him to orally participate. Nevertheless, his introverted behavior seemed not to be troublesome for the sharing concept the group activity demanded. After a while, this timid student started to speak a bit more.

When nonverbal signs draw others' attention reflecting on similar nonverbal response, we say that a nonverbal interactive meaning was established. Also known as a coordinated smile (EKMAN, 2003), this type of smile reflects the individual's attitude in correspondence with a specific tone of voice or an expressive glance, for example. As shown in image 1, the students' spontaneous smile could also be regarded as a coordinated smile for it was connected to the shared pleasant atmosphere among the students (EKMAN & FRIESEN, 1969). When one student gave a smile, others responded by giving the same smile.

Regarding the level of social relations established in this group activity among students, it could be noticed a more symmetrical relation (MARCUSCHI, 1991; KOCH, 2006). Symmetrical relations can be identified when the interlocutors share similar social roles, and when everyone is responsible for the turn-taking system. Each one has the right to talk. In this group activity, the students seemed to be in their own right in coordinating who spoke and when they spoke, using their spontaneous smile as a sign of agreement and enjoyment. Although the timid student seemed to participate less than others as his body movement showed, he was in a situation "[…] in which the several participants have supposedly the same right to self-choose the word, the topic to deal with and to decide about his/her time" (MARCUSCHI,1991, p. 16) (my translation).

The same symmetrical relation with the Duchenne smile can be seen in image 2, as illustrated below. Differently from image 1, in this

group activity all students seem to share agreement through their Duchenne smile. Although there is one student with a more advanced level of proficiency – the one in the middle – all of them seems to own the same right to coordinate who should speak first. There was no assistance given but negotiation of how their story would be developed. Similar to the group in image 1, this group was sharing ideas about Mr. Takeray's professional future. As seen in figure 2, three students were attentive to what one of them was saying. According to their head position, they were signaling attention, enjoyment and agreement through the Duchenne smile, as the student on the left kept talking.

Figure 2. Students' Duchenne smile

The same interactive meaning of these students' smile could be seen during classroom observations. Noticing two students talking about a downtown handbags store, one of them used hand movements followed by a smile as they went on explaining where that store was situated. Another student, who was attentively listening to him, nodded his head making his classmate see that he was following the conversation. According to research on nonverbal elements in EFL classrooms (Santos, 2007; Gregersen, 2001), these gestures serve to give emphasis to the student's speech when providing explanation about the store place. As for the smile, I could observe that its use probably reinforced the explanation given by the student-speaker. Hence, as the student nodded his head, the coordinated and Duchenne smile appeared.

CONCLUSION

In the present analysis, I noticed a great social relation of proximity among students in the group activities. One of the nonverbal elements used to emphasize this social and friendly behavior among them was by means of the Duchenne or spontaneous smile (EKMAN, 2003). According to Ekman (2003), the spontaneous smile is often found in social interactions in which individuals express happiness and pleasure. In the group activities under investigation, the students' smile tended to facilitate oral interaction, leaving them with enough freedom to express themselves, and contribute to a better self esteem in those interactive moments in which they are (re)formulating stories, as shown.

Instead of complementing or emphasizing the spoken language in classroom conversations, as most classroom research has noticed about the role of nonverbal signs (SOUZA; DANTAS; OLIVEIRA, 2007), in this study, the students' smile tended to express their personal feelings and intentions in relation to the class activities they took part of. The understanding and interpretations of their Duchenne smile could be seen in accordance with what they did and said in the group. In other words, the smiling expression appeared to be an important interactive nonverbal element that not only could favor a closer relation among students, but also served as a sign to help them co-construct the oral activities, favoring an increase of oral interaction among them (RECTOR & TRINTA, 1993).

O SORRISO DOS ALUNOS NAS AULAS DE INGLÊS

RESUMO

Este artigo discute a importância do sorriso espontâneo dos alunos na interação em sala de aula em Língua Inglesa, e sua implicação para a produção oral dos alunos. Os resultados mostraram que o sorriso espontâneo dos alunos serviu como um fundamental elemento não-verbal interativo por não apenas favorecer uma relação mais próxima entre os alunos, bem como ajudá-los na co-construção das atividades orais durante os trabalhos em grupo. Isto é, o sorriso Duchenne dos alunos mostrou-se como um indicativo não verbal de proximidade e de aumento de interação oral entre eles.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: interação em sala de aula de Língua Inglesa, sorriso dos alunos, produtividade oral.

Nota

1 This work was presented in the International Congress of Language and Interaction II, in São Leopoldo-RS, 2010.

References

Acioli, H. K. B. A Interação existente entre os elementos não-verbais e verbais no discurso de sala de aula. In: Santos, Maria Francisca Oliveira (Org.). *Os elementos verbais e não verbais no discurso de sala de aula.* Maceió: Edufal, 2007. p. 87-96.

Armengaud, Françoise. *A pragmática*. Tradução de Marcos Marcionilo. São Paulo: Parábola Editorial, 2006.

Bohn, M. T. *Japanese classroom behavior:* a micro-analysis of self-reports vs Classroom observations – with implications for Language teachers. Applied Language Learning, v. 14, n. 1, 2004, p. 1-35. Disponível em: <www.dliflc. edu/archive/documents/all14_14onecomplete.pdf#page=6>. Acesso em: 7 dez. 2009.

Coulon, A. *La Etnometodología*. Tercera edición. Catedra: Madrid, 2005.

Dantas, L. M. *Nonverbal Language in EFL classroom interaction*. 74 p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Letras) – Universidade Federal de Alagoas, Maceió, 2007.

Davies, F. *A comunicação não verbal.* São Paulo: Summus, 1979.

Ekman, P.; Friesen, W. *The repertoire of nonverbal behavior:* categories, origins, usage and coding. Semiótica, 1, p. 49-48. Disponível em: < www. paulekman.com/publications/journal-articles-book-chapters>. Acesso em: 5 jan. 2010.

Ekman, P. *Emotions revealed:* recognizing faces and feelings to improve communication and emotional life. 2nd Edition. New York: A Holt Paperback, 2003.

Freitas-Magalhães, A. *A psicologia do sorriso humano.* Porto: Edições UFP, 2004.

Goffman, E. A situação negligenciada. In: Ribeiro, Branca Telles; Garcez, Pedro M. (Org.). *Sociolinguística interactional*. 2. ed. São Paulo: Loyola, 2002. p. 13-20.

Gregersen, T. S. *Language learning beyond words:* incorporating body language into classroom activities. Reflections on English Language Teaching,

v. 6, n. 1, p. 51-64. Disponível em: <www.nus.edu.sg/celc/publications/reltVol61.htm>. Acesso em: 4 jan. 2001.

Gumperz, J. J. *Studies in interactional sociolinguistics* 1. CUP, 1982.

Kerbrat-Orecchioni, C. *Análise da conversação:* princípios e métodos. Tradução de Carlos Piovezani Filho. São Paulo: Parábola Editorial, 2006.

Koch, I. V. *A Inter-ação pela Linguagem.* São Paulo: Contexto, 2006.

Lewis, T. N. *Gender and Nonverbal Communication in the Foreign Language classroom.* [2005]. Disponível em: <http://spanish.ucdavis.edu/docs/2005_colloquium/linguistics_lewis_tasha_v2.pf>. Acesso em: 4 dez. 2009.

Lorscher, W. *Nonverbal aspects of Teacher-pupil communication in the Foreign language classroom.* Web Proceedings, July 2003. Disponível em: www.ec.hku.hk/kd2proc/proceedings/fullpaper/.../LorscherWolfgang.pdf. Acesso em: 5 dez. 2009.

Marcuschi, L. A. *Análise da conversação.* 2. ed. São Paulo: Ática, 1991. 89 p.

Oliveira, C. L. A Relevância dos efeitos faciais na conversação face a face no ambiente de sala de aula. In: Santos, Maria Francisca Oliveira (Org.). *Os elementos verbais e não verbais no discurso de sala de aula.* Maceió: EDUFAL, p. 45-68, 2007.

Pennycook, A. Actions speak louder than words: Paralanguage, Communication, and Education. *Tesol Quartely*, v. 19, n. 2, p. 259-282, 1985.

Rector, M.; Trinta, A. R. *Comunicação do corpo.* 2. ed. São Paulo: Ática, 1993.

Sacks, H.; Schegloff, E.; Jefferson, G. A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn Taking for Conversation. In: Schenkein, XXXXXXXXX (Ed.). *Studies in the organization of conversational interaction.* Academic Press: USA, 1978. p. 7-55.

Santos, M. F. O. Os elementos verbais e não verbais no discurso de sala de aula. In: Santos, Maria Francisca Oliveira (Org.). *Os elementos verbais e não verbais no discurso de sala de aula.* Maceió: Edufal, 2007. p. 17-44.

Sime, D. Because of her gesture, it's very easy to understand – learners' perceptions of teachers' gestures in the Foreign language class. In: Mccafferty, S.; Stam, G. (Ed.). *Gesture:* Second Language Acquisition and Classroom Research. New York/London: Routledge, 2008. p. 259-280. Disponível em: <www.strath.ac.uk>. Acesso em: 3 dez. 2009.

Souza, D. P. A Intersecção entre a fala e os gestos no comportamento do professor em sala de aula. In: Santos, Maria Francisca Oliveira (Org.). *Os

elementos verbais e não verbais no discurso de sala de aula. Maceió: Edufal, 2007. p. 45-68.

WARDHAUGH, R. Ethnography and Ethnomethodology. *An introduction to Sociolinguistics.* Third Edition. Blackwell publishers: USA, 1998. p. 237-254.