

Exploring teacher talk in training classrooms: A case study at SD Linimasa, Kuningan

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the types of teacher talk and their meanings in dealing the diverse student. This research aimed to explore several fundamental aspects that occurred in classroom interaction. They are 1) the types of teacher talk, 2) the most dominant and the least performed teacher talk type, 3) the contribution of teacher talk in supporting learning. This research was a case study with participants of three English teachers. The data had been collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires. In examining the utterances uttered by all teachers, video recordings had been utilized throughout the learning process. The result of the video transcription was then analyzed using Moskowitz's FLINT system to categorize the type of teacher talk. The result was then cross checked with the interview and questionnaire to support the validity data. The study's findings demonstrated that during the teaching and learning process, teachers used nearly every kind of teacher discourse. Joking was the least frequent sort of speech, while asking questions was the most frequent. Through their utterances during the session, the teacher also provided support to the students who transferred from situations where English was not their first or second language. Teachers facing comparable situations may find it helpful to consider the study's implications and outcomes while trying to boost student engagement, which in turn encourages students to participate more actively in the learning process.

Keywords: *Exploration; classroom interaction; teachers' talk;*

INTRODUCTION

The communication process between teachers and students is considered as the most important parts of the classroom activities. Yanfen and Yuqin (2010) said that the interaction can create a harmonious situation and encourages a relationship between teachers and students. Tsui (1995) also stated that the development and the key of success in the teaching and learning process are influenced by the teacher in enabling the interaction between a teacher and students. The teachers use the classroom interaction in doing some activities such

as sharing knowledge, asking questions, giving feedback, and so on during the teaching and learning process which is commonly called teachers' talk.

Teacher's talk is necessary to facilitate students which do not dominate the teaching and learning process. Nasir, et.al (2019) argues that an ideal classroom interaction should provide discussion activities that encourage students to do more practice in the language they learn and enable their inquiries to be responsible for their meaning.

Many English teachers based on the preliminary observation did not use the target language all of the time in the interaction process especially in the English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom (Winanta, 2020). Besides, students were less active, and still difficult to develop their English communication (Nasir, et.al, 2019). According to Long (1996), interaction affects language acquisition because the conversation and linguistics transformation which happen in teachers talk provide learners with the input they need. It means that the interaction process is very important for students to understand and develop their target language. Therefore, when teachers are getting less in using the target language, it makes students have less opportunity to comprehend a target language.

Several research on teachers talk show that this topic is interesting to be explored. Those are Nisa (2014), Wicaksana (2016), Putri (2015), Aisyah (2016), Nasir et. al. (2019), and Winanta et al. (2020). Nisa (2014) conducted a case study to investigate classroom interaction in an EFL-speaking classroom. She investigated an English teacher and 25 students in the second semester of the English Education Department of the University of Kuningan which employed the FLINT (Foreign Language Interaction) system as developed by Moskowitz (1971) framework as the guidance to obtain the data. The result showed that both teachers and students used all FLINT categories system during the teaching and learning process. She also recommended for the teacher to pay more attention to encouraging students to build their confidence, especially in speaking skills, and asking more questions to trigger students' communicative skills to speak English.

Even though there is much discussion on teacher talk in the literature, there is a paucity of the data-based published research studies on how interaction is maintained during the EFL classroom. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to explore the teacher talk in EFL classroom interactions by involving several experienced English teachers. A framework of Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT) by Moskowitz was reckoned as the most suitable framework to be applied in this research to categorize the teacher talk type based on the occurrence. It can be used also to find the frequency of each category of the teacher talk itself. As a final result, it is expected to give better and more significant contributions to both parties—teachers, and students. The students may voice their thought about the learning process while the teacher may use the finding of this research to evaluate their talks production to fill the gap and make a lively classroom interaction so the learning situation becomes less stressful (Einsenring & Margana, 2018; Arrumaisa. Et. al, 2019).

METHOD

The study took place in SD Linimasa, Kuningan. Given the research questions and objectives, it seems sense to conclude that the best method for this kind of study is a qualitative one. Qualitative research encompasses numerous designs, such as narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and a case study (Creswell and Poth, 2016). As part of a descriptive qualitative study, the researchers determined that a case study approach is best suited for this research, in which the identification of teacher talk types was examined through a case study lens. Citing Creswell and Poth (2016), a case study's research process involved gathering and combining a variety of qualitative data, including documents, audiovisual content, and observation, in order to convey and achieve a comprehensive understanding of the project. Listening, recording, and taking notes are all used by the researchers as the instruments. After speech has been captured and recorded as data, it is transcribed using note-taking procedures. A voice recorder used by the participant is a gathering technique related to observation. According to Cohen et al. (2007), it offers a distinctive illustration of actual individuals in real-life circumstances, which confers several benefits. Instead of only giving abstract theories or principles, it can aid readers in understanding concepts more clearly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of teacher talk occurred in classroom interaction

Based on the data, there are 10 types of teacher talk that can be used during the lesson. The data can be shown by the table as follow:

Table 1. Types of Teacher Talk Percentage

No	Types of Teacher Talk	Percentage
1.	Asking Questions	45%
2.	Giving Information	15%
3.	Giving Direction	15%
4.	Praising or encouraging	10%
5.	Repeating Responses	4%
6.	Using ideas of Students	3%
7.	Jokes	2%
8.	Direct Pattern Drilling	2%
9.	Dealing with Feeling	1%
10.	Correcting without Rejection	3%

Asking questions

Asking questions was mostly uttered by all the teachers during lesson process. Asking questions can confirm whether the students understand the lesson or not. The researcher

found that the teacher intentionally asked questions and expected the answers from students, this was employed more amid learning activities especially when teachers were explaining the learning materials or during the experimenting activities. The example below is learners to speak very little since the question only need a short exact answer. This is a display question that the answers have been anticipated.

T : "Have you ever visited museum?"

Ss : "Yeeees."

T : "Can you mention one of the museum in Kuningan?"

Ss : "Gedung Naskah"

The conversation above showed that the answers of the questions had already been anticipated by teachers. In most classes, this type of teacher talk is potentially able to assist teachers to engage the students in the lesson. Notwithstanding, asking questions was effective enough to build interaction between teachers and students during classroom activities. There is a referential question which the teacher 'does not know the answer. The teacher usually performed this type of question to explore how deep the students' understanding of a certain topic is. Furthermore, by performing this type of question, the teacher can promote students high level of thinking.

T : "Do you know the difference among countries, nationalities and languages?"

T : "Why is it important to learn our ancestor and where they come from?"

T : "What is your opinion after reading the text relating to countries, nationalities and languages?"

The above referential questions performed by the teachers allowed students to speak up with their judgement on their conclusion. By performing referential questions, the teachers can improve a better classroom interaction since the questions require long answers which can lead to a long discussion between teacher and students or among the students themselves. The referential questions also facilitated the students with more chance to practice the target language since the students can speak up with their opinion toward the topic being asked. By doing so, the students' chance to achieve a better output in learning the target language was increased.

Giving information

In classroom learning, usually, when teachers needed to explain more to clarify the materials, it could bring confusion to the students so the students so the teachers needed to explain more to clarify the materials. Based on the data, the teachers frequently asked about new vocabularies that appeared simultaneously in the material because the students might

not understand the meaning of such vocabularies. It can be seen from the data that the teachers tried to give further information on the specific vocabulary.

T : "There are two pattern in writing namely girl friend and girlfriend. One is using space and the other is not using space. Kalo kata girl friend itu adalah teman biasa tapi cewek, sedangkan yang disatukan menjadi frase girlfriend itu adalah someone special."

Giving information sometimes has a different function. In some situations, during the class, the researcher found that teachers use this type of talk to enhance students' comprehension of the learning materials. The teacher may give information that functions to recap the whole material so it commonly came up at the end of the lecture.

T : "So this is the last learning material today. We have answered all the questions from the text given and then I have already given you a paper about "People from Other Countries"

The researcher also found that teachers gave information at the beginning of the study. It can be inferred that this was to grasp the students' attention before moving on to the core material. It was important to do this so that the students can engage with the specific material which the teacher wanted to explain.

T : "Well today we have new materials, but this material has been discussed last week. I just want to review it."

Referring to this style of teacher talk, it can be concluded that giving the information could be implemented on different occasions. In the Indonesian EFL learning classroom, it is very common for teachers to spend teaching time explaining the materials because some material obligated a detailed explanation. Once the teacher needed to make a lecture on the learning material, they will use this type of talk, giving information, as much as possible to engage the students with the lesson.

Giving direction

Giving directions means that the teacher gave instructions, commands, or orders to which the students were expected to comply.

T : "In the previous lessons, we talked about the importance of education in personal development and learned that the education is practically a must to reach success."

Look at your book now. Below are some factors that are conducive to success. Add to the list and discuss with your friend in what way they contribute to success.

In this study, giving directions is fundamental since learning a foreign language requires more guidance and direction from the teacher. The teacher realized that the learners vary in language competence so they tried to help the students understand what to do by directing the action needed to accomplish the task.

T : "Now you are going to talk about your lifeline. Draw your lifeline including dates but no other information. In pairs, ask and answer questions to guess the missing information. For example: Did you get married in 2021? No, I bought my first car. After that, tell the class something interesting about your partner. Example: She bought her first car in 2021.

As a dominant type of teacher talk uttered by all teachers, it can be assumed that the teaching and learning processes were still controlled by the teachers. However, most of the time the teacher used this utterance functioning as instruction or command for the students so that they can complete the task. It can be inferred that this type of talk was mostly used by EFL teachers to give instructions, guidance, commands, or request because of those types of utterances cannot be separated from foreign language learning.

Praising or encouraging

Praises or encouragement is positive feedback from the teacher toward the students' effort in the learning process. In this experiment, it was observably easy to find that every time a student answered the question, teachers would give praise or encouragement to the student

T : "Have you prepared presentation about your family relationship?"

S : "Yessss."

T : "Wow marvelous. Let's practice in front of the class."

This type was intensively used by the teachers as an appreciation of the students' participation. It was mostly used especially in interaction activities since the students can have their time to state their responses. Students' willingness to engaged with the lesson escalated as they were treated with positive feedback by the teachers. Therefore, the teachers must actively utter this type of talk for their students to build positive learning behavior. Providing praise or encouragement is essential to the students since it beneficiary raises their confidence in developing the target language.

Repeating responses

Repeating students' responses was generally employed to follow up the students' response using the same word after they participated or gave a response to the teacher's questions.

T : "Today, we are going to learn about...?"

Ss : "Places around us."

T : "Yes, places around us. Can you tell me what they are?"

Those conversations disclosed that the type of repeating student's response appeared when the teachers repeat the student's responses precisely without changing and developing the sense of the word. Repeating specific answers from students could potentially assist both the teacher and the students to connect the ideas from one student to another student. Henceforth, the teachers explained that this type was very important for teachers and beneficial for students as a booster toward their contributions to the lesson.

Using ideas of students

In this study, the use of students' ideas appeared during the explanation of the lesson material. This type of talk can be simply called a statement which indicates agreement toward the students' thoughts. In other words, teachers wanted to simply check the student's understanding and the student's engagement with the lesson they conducted. Once the students were able to express their ideas that related to the material being learned, this proved that they were engaged with the lesson.

T : "Do you still remember what we are going to do today?"

Ss : "Make a presentation today."

T : Yes, we are going to conduct presentation of our discussion. Who will be the next?"

The results from all those talks proved that the teachers accepted the students' ideas by paraphrasing the sentences without changing the main ideas. All the appropriate ideas coming from students were accepted by the teachers, this indicated that all the teachers appreciated the students' contributions. This is important and is considered an excellent way in lifting the student's confidence when the teacher agreed with the ideas expressed by the students. This strategy pointed out that making a clearer explanation of the students' ideas is quite helpful for other students who have low proficiency to understand the learning material.

Telling jokes

A relaxing but vibrant classroom situation can be achieved through jokes that the teacher uttered during the learning activities. Jokes refer to an intentional kidding, humor, or fun which is attempted to make an enjoyable situation.

T : "By the way, you can get a discount to the Alfamart or Indomaret if you make the best presentation today, ha...ha...ha.."

It was also discovered in one classroom that there was a teacher who jokes a lot during the lesson. This can be inferred that the teacher wanted the students to be engaged with the lesson. By creating jokes, the learning atmosphere in the classroom can be more alive.

Those conversations proved that the teachers tried to create a relaxed atmosphere during the lesson in the classrooms. Thus, it potentially made the students feel more comfortable in following the learning process. However, the teacher who did not use jokes during the lesson cannot be justified as she was not a good teacher because she adjusted to the students' characteristics, learning materials, and teaching methods which were not in accordance with the use of jokes.

Direct pattern drilling

Drilling is a technique that has been used in EFL classrooms which emphasizes repetition patterns through oral practice to demonstrate students' ability in using specific language items. The data from the recording revealed that this type of talk was used by the teachers to encourage the students' confidence in both vocabulary and pronunciation. It was regularly used at the end of the learning process, especially in communication activities.

T : "I have two sisters and no brother."

Ss : "I have two sisters and no brother."

T : "My parents are from Solo."

Ss : "My parents are from Solo."

It can be assumed that the teacher realized that the students might face difficulties in practicing uncommon words, pronunciation, intonation, or appropriate stress. Henceforth, the teacher stimulated them by doing this direct pattern drilling to overcome their learning obstacles.

Dealing with feeling

According to the video recording, dealing with feelings occurred when the teacher had the same sense as the students feeling. This type of talk was discovered at the beginning or the middle of the learning process when the teacher found the classroom ambiance distracted the student's engagement. The teacher then tried to anticipate it by asking how they were doing and tried to find the best way to show her attention to the student's feelings.

T : Hi, everyone. Why do you look so tired today? Do you have a long day today?

In this study, the researcher also found that this talk type of talk occurred because the teacher gave freedom to students to choose what they wanted to do during the learning process. Giving freedom to students can also allow them to choose their comfort zone during the lesson. By so doing, the students were expected to grab their maximum attention to the learning process.

This type of talk was still produced at a low frequency so that it did not appear in one classroom. The teacher clarified that this type of teacher talk might not appear during her class because it was the time for her to give lectures on new material. Besides, there were only a few students who were bold in showing or expressing their feelings.

Correcting without rejection

This type of talk was uttered by only one teacher and counted as the least used teacher talk category. This type of talk was found in the middle of the lesson when students tried to answer a question and made a mistake which can be tolerated by the teacher.

T : "Talking the members in the family, what is my brother's son".

Ss : "Cousin".

T : "Nephew".

The example showed that the student might be a little confused about how to respond correctly. Consequently, the teacher preferred to use correcting without rejection rather than criticizing the students' responses. Furthermore, it can be claimed that the type of talk was aimed to accept the students' responses by giving a small revision since it was only a little mistake that did not change the main idea so that their response should not be rejected. The tone of the teacher should not sound criticizing. It is considered a better solution to provide meaningful feedback instead of rejecting the students' responses which potentially ruin their willingness in learning.

The most and the least types of teacher talk uttered by the teachers

The frequency numbers of teacher talk uttered were calculated to find the most and the least uttered type of teacher talk that occurred during the teaching and learning process in the EFL classrooms. The researcher administered a simple descriptive statistic based on the transcription of the video recording to calculate the frequency of teacher talk types.

Asking questions was the most type of teacher talk uttered by all teachers. It is followed by giving information during the lesson because the interactions between the teachers and the students in the classroom mostly consisted of giving information about the materials and providing the students with lots of opportunities to ask questions whenever they have something they did not understand.

The contribution of teacher talks to supporting learning

The teacher talk was very important to stimulate the students to participate in the learning process because most students in class prefer to be silent unless they were asked or allowed to perform their language competence. Students who had low language competence were usually more hesitant to actively use English to communicate. For these reasons, performing many types of teacher talk which were suitable for the student's needs, was hoped to be a fundamental action which could impress the students, boost their learning mood, and raise their learning participation.

CONCLUSION

This research was also done to point out the most and the least type of teacher talk that was uttered by the teachers. The data pointed out that the most type of teacher uttered was asking questions, giving information, and giving direction. One function of asking questions was to confirm whether the students understand the lesson or not. Based on the interviews done with the teachers, they frequently asked questions to the students because they need to know whether the students were engaged in the lesson or not. Asking questions was also considered effective in creating an active interaction between teachers and students during the lesson. Another frequent type of teacher talk that was mostly uttered was giving information and giving directions. Giving information was uttered when teachers were explaining the materials and giving directions was uttered when teachers were giving commands; when asking the students to do tasks or assignments.

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