
Engaging Mind: The Art of Teacher Talk In Efl Classroom

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Abstract

This research investigates the critical role of teacher talk in enhancing student engagement and comprehension in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Through qualitative methods, including observations, interviews, and documentation at SDIT Widya Cendekia, the study examines the communication strategies employed by teachers to create an interactive learning environment. Findings reveal that effective teacher talk incorporates various interactive features such as scaffolding, questioning techniques, and the use of multimedia resources, which actively involve students and facilitate language acquisition. The results also indicate that the teacher must maintain a dynamic classroom environment conducive to questioning and surveying while changing her style of communication to facilitate the educational process. This study speaks directly to how the teacher can optimize teacher talk in order to create the desired learning outcomes in the EFL context by stating best practices to engage students and support language development

Keywords: Art of Teacher, Teacher Talk, English Teacher, EFL Classroom

INTRODUCTION

In learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), communication between teachers and students plays an important role in shaping an effective learning experience. One of the essential elements of communication is teacher talk or the way teachers speak in class. Teacher talks not only includes the delivery of information, but also involves strategies to motivate, engage, and facilitate students' understanding of the material being taught. The quality of teacher talk is very decisive for learning success, especially in the context of EFL, where the language used by teachers is the main model for students. The proper use of language, including word choice, intonation, as well as questions that encourage engagement, can help students improve their language skills while maintaining interest in the lesson.

According to (Hedge, 2003; Siregar & Lismay, 2023) the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process is influenced by a wide range of factors, including the instructor, curriculum, syllabus, resources, techniques, media, assessment, students, and interaction. Although each component has a role to play, the instructor has the most influence on how well the teaching and learning process goes. A teacher plays a crucial role in the teaching and learning process. Teachers and students constantly interact to foster social connections and mutual understanding. Their communication styles vary, reflecting their unique goals and intentions. Classroom interactions, in particular, play a crucial role in the teaching and learning process. These exchanges involve two or more individuals sharing and responding to ideas, feelings, and opinions. According to (L. Anisah et al., 2023; N. Anisah et al., 2019; Diksani et al., 2021) given the significance of the teacher in the teaching and learning process, effective classroom communication between the instructor and students is essential. A teacher who presents the subject or even simplifies it fosters effective communication.

According to (L. Anisah et al., 2023; Hymes, 2021) to list the eight speech functions that educators need to comprehend in order to make their conversations more significant in conversational situations. They are as follows: Contact or phatic (channel), metalinguistic (code),

poetic (message form), contextual (setting), or directive (addressee), expressive (addressor), referential (subject), and metacommunicative (event). According to (Jing & Jing, 2018; Nunan, n.d.) defined teacher's talk as the language teachers use to plan lessons and instruct language learners. Classroom practice can make language dynamic even when it is set and steady in the curriculum and textbook (Al-Awidi, H; Aldhafeeri, 2017). The language employed in the classroom is a continuous process of interactive adjustment between students and their teachers, as well as between students and textbooks.

The language that teachers use or speak in class matters a lot. Instructors can effectively guide students to develop their abilities in the goal states (Khusna et al., 2022) of learning during the teaching and learning process in the classroom, the teachers speak includes the linguistic order, the explanation, and the discussion. The effectiveness of the teaching and learning process is influenced by the language that the teacher uses. According to (Kogut, n.d.) an excellent teacher's speech reflects and fosters learning more successfully. Then (Jing & Jing, 2018; Yuli, 2021) to their definition, an effective teacher talk should meet six requirements, which include goal-setting, eliciting prior experience, encouraging collaboration, encouraging independent learning, and fostering creativity and problem-solving.

There are several researchers who have investigate of teacher talks. The first from (N. Anisah et al., 2019) to find out kind questioning strategies of teachers scaffolding students' learning in reading to understand how students responded to the teachers' questions, and to find out teachers questioning strategies explanation of the questions scaffold students' learning in reading level from. Research reveals that the teachers were using variety of key tactic questions across all variants. Listening to responses and responding is the number one strategy, in terms of students' responses The most typical response is active response in natural English. In teachers' questioning strategies to scaffold student reading learning, there are frequently performed before reading activities conducted by structuring, pitching and putting clearly, directing and distributing tactic.

The second from (Sistyawan et al., 2022) this study said the success of the learning process, particularly in mastering English as a foreign language (EFL) at different educational levels, can be attributed to the teacher's speaking. When EFL students enter the classroom, they must adjust. The purpose of this narrative review is to identify the type of teacher speak and its significance for EFL students at various educational levels. Based on (1) speech modification to facilitate learners, (2) the teacher's position as a facilitator, (3) answers to learners, and (4) their attitude in the classroom, the study's findings led to the identification of four categories of teacher talk forms. The last from (Pratiwi, 2018) this study discussed instructor speaking during class interactions, monolingual and bilingual teaching methods in EFL classrooms, and some earlier research findings. The arguments in favor of the bilingual approach were derived from a few studies. According to this literature review, in order to have an efficient teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom, teachers must control the quality and quantity of their conversation. Because too much teacher speak would affect students' enthusiasm to learn, it is better to limit teacher talk time and increase student discussion time according to the needs of the students.

This study focuses on the art of teacher communication in the context of EFL learning, by highlighting the strategies that teachers use to engage students. Therefore, this research intends to fill the gap with investigate the techniques used by EFL teachers to enhance student engagement through teacher talk, understand how teacher talk facilitates comprehension and language acquisition in EFL settings and analyse the interactional patterns between teachers and students, the impact on classroom dynamics and find best practices in teacher talk that can encourage student engagement, create an interactive learning environment, and improve the effectiveness of English language learning.

RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher employs qualitative research since it has been determined to be the most suited approach for answering the research questions of this research. The data presented was in the form of words. According to (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) qualitative research is research that is conducted in their natural setting; the researcher acts as a part of the research field. It purposes to interpret the meanings of the phenomena observed. The researcher described the features of teacher talk that were used by the teacher to lead student involvement and what involvements students did in classroom discussion activities in an EFL class at

This research will be carried out in SDIT Widya Cendekia. The research chose this school because this school once made its school one of the schools that has bilingual classes. Where children learn to use the introduction to English. This research focused on several English teachers who worked in an Islamic elementary school environment.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The instruments of this research are field notes, audio recordings, interview guidelines, and teaching materials. Field notes are instruments used to document the occurrence of an event during the observation phase of data collection. In the meantime, a semi-structured interview is used to create the interview script, which includes questions about various teaching strategies and how they are implemented on the hypothesis of Vacca (1999). Then, the term "guide of documentation" refers to a number of documents that must be recorded in order to verify the veracity of the data the researcher has gathered, including lesson plans, student names, and instructional materials. According to (Arodjiah, 2020; Denzin, 1978) there are three steps in analyzing the data. Based on the needs of the research, the researcher uses investigative triangulation to minimize the subjectivity of interpretation.

TECHNIQUE OF COLLECTING DATA

In this research, the researcher used three ways are observation, interview and documentation to get more information related of teachers talk in EFL classroom.

Observation

The first method of gathering data that a researcher used was observation. According to (Creswell, 1999; Creswell & Creswell, 2018) one of the most crucial techniques for gathering data in qualitative research is observation. Direct field observation and note-taking, including recording, are used to gather information on the research topic. Field notes are necessary in order to comprehend the observation's content. Field notes are instruments used to document the occurrence of an event during the observation phase of data collection.

An observation is a thorough synopsis of the issue under investigation. Reflective and descriptive notes are included. The researcher explains how instructional tactics are implemented in the descriptive notes.

Interview

An interview is a thorough and methodical procedure of asking and receiving questions from an informant in order to fully gather the desired information. According to (Patton, 2003), an interview is a dialogue between two individuals with the intention of gathering information to aid in the process of accomplishing specific objectives. In this instance, the researcher asks participants questions about the research topic in accordance with the interview guide, which is divided into smaller questions to provide clear, thorough information.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen by the researcher in order to obtain a thorough grasp of the subject matter, particularly the kinds and applications of instructional tactics. As

mentioned, this strategy, in which questions are prepared beforehand, allows for extensive preparation and maintains the conversation's relevance. To ensure that the questions adequately address the research issue, the interview instrument will be pilot tested before being used.

Documentation

The researcher documents this study by taking pictures of several kinds of exercises that show how English professors instruct reading comprehension to SDIT Widya Cendekia pupils. According to (Johansson, 2019) documentation is a source of written or visual information that can help in understanding what takes place in the classroom. The researcher also gathers document data, including lesson plans, student names, instructional materials, and student results.

According to (Milles & Huberman, 2014) are all steps data analysis technique that the researcher uses. Data collection, reduction, display, and verification. An essential component of the tasks involved in performing data analysis is data collection. The researcher gathers information about problems pertaining to the use of teaching strategies through documentation, in-depth interviews, and observation. This data reduction is derived from documentation, interviews, and observation data about the reading comprehension teaching methods used by English teachers. The data collected through observations, interviews, and documentation about English teachers' reading comprehension strategies were structured for accessible examination. The researcher proceeded to formulate a definitive conclusion, acknowledging the tentative nature of earlier findings. This process entailed verifying data accuracy during presentation. The final conclusion, substantiated by compelling research data, aimed to produce new findings that specifically addressed the research problem: the teaching strategies implemented for learning English in EFL Classroom

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interactive features of teacher speech found in some teachers who were investigated during the learning process such as using flash card, board game and media television.

Flash Card

The teacher using flash card and offered a complimentary question period in the questioning stage to encourage students to ask. Students have a designated time slot allocated by the teacher for free questioning (Dusengimana, 2023; Watts et al., 1997). Furthermore, before the teacher gives the main activity of teaching about "Animals", time to ask questions is given to students to be able to mention animals in English that they know. After this, students are asked to name their favorite animal and provide a description of the animal in a group. Each group consists of several students and the teacher provides a worksheet that contains pictures, drawings, as well as words related to animals.



Figure 1. *Flash Card*

Many students are enthusiastic about answering and asking questions about animals. In this activity, the amount of students' knowledge about animal names increases. The target language is actively used by students in this activity and class interaction appears. The teacher's remarks performed the conversational interaction feature. This section reveals the activities performed by the teacher that are being investigated on first-grade students and focuses on which speech contains the interactive features of the teacher's speech. According to (Marshall & Horton, 2011; Walsh, 2006) in two class observations, researchers collected data. Researchers join the classroom and sit at the back of the classroom to observe the teaching and learning process with two different English teachers being investigated. Next, in order to encourage the students to pose insightful questions in class, the teacher was advised to create a responsive environment. According to (Biddulph et al., 1986) one strategy to encourage student inquiry is to create a receptive classroom environment. This way refers to the teacher's use of an accommodating, inquisitive environment. In particular, teachers must welcome students' queries with enthusiasm and without being intimidating.

Board Games

The teacher uses the game board to explore the children's thoughts about the material being taught in a game way and make them not feel bored. And in board games, children are trained to find new things such as new vocabulary. After playing, teachers can reflect on their experience in the game and how their interactions, the strategies they use, and the results they achieve can provide insight into their teaching style and approach. Board games are also made to train students' focus in learning such as communication and problem solving.



Figure 2. ***Board Games***

Board games give teachers to teach and communicate in a fun and interactive way. Teachers can create a collaborative environment, encourage the exchange of ideas among students and can be used as an effective tool for professional development. By choosing the right game and facilitating relevant discussions, board games can be a valuable asset in improving communication and collaboration among educators.

Interactive Media Using Television (TV)

TV as a medium that is able to make the classroom atmosphere more interactive. Teachers can interact easily with the presence of TV, because after students see interesting pictures, videos, animations, and graphics. This visual content can spark students' curiosity and spark more questions, comments, and discussions. As well as a dynamic visual display tends to be easier for students to understand. Media also very influential in focusing students in the learning process and adding new vocabulary.



Figure 3. *Interactive Media Using Television (TV)*

Furthermore, there are several teachers who have special techniques used to attract and retain students' attention. The signs and visual demonstrations also to supplement verbal instruction, teachers use images, flashcards, and gestures to clarify meanings. Teachers also often use praise to build confidence, saying phrases like "Good job!" or "Right!" even when students make partial efforts. This encourages shy students to participate. On the other hand, teachers are also as a tool for understanding that acquires languages with highlight ways to support understanding on the basics such as repetition and classroom exercises

According to (Gass & Selinker, 2015), interaction patterns and classroom dynamics the interaction patterns observed in the basic classroom reveal several important dynamics, such as: The teacher uses a question and answer style, this pattern involves the teacher asking questions and being asked to respond in unison or in a choir. The goal is to grab students' attention, build active participation, and create a dynamic rhythm in learning. Next, the teacher calls the students individually to answer the questions, in this pattern, the teacher takes turns calling the students one by one to answer the questions. The teacher mentions the student's name so that they feel called and responsible for responding.

The first and second data the researcher can get the information not all interactive features of the teacher's conversation were found in the two teachers observed. There are only several features found from the two teachers that are being investigated. The features found are scaffolding, direct repairs, reference questions, seeking clarification, confirmation checks, teacher echoes, extended teacher turnovers, turn completion, and display questions. Content feedback, extended wait times, extended student turnovers, teacher interruptions, and form-focused feedback are features that were not found in the two teachers being investigated.

According to (Fredricks et al., 2016) this type of interaction shows that teachers can influence student engagement. Additionally, excellent teaching is believed to enhance educational outcomes partly because it encourages students to participate in activities that support their learning. The characteristics of educational settings that influence student performance during teaching and learning are identified through student engagement. Student engagement can be measured through behavioral factors. The data collected typically reflects actual behavior patterns in the classroom. Based on the discussion above, teacher talk in learning has a vital role because it can create interaction between teachers and students in the classroom. Effective two-way communication in the learning process will be able to make it easier to achieve the initial learning objectives. The use of mother tongue is also still the language of instruction in the English learning process in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Teacher talks in the EFL classroom are basic that serve as a foundation to create an environment that is engaging and nurturing, facilitating and can also foster more meaningful interactions. Teacher techniques in the way of cheerfulness, praise and using visuals and gestures are very important to maintain students' attention in the classroom. Not only that, the pronunciation is repeated and simplified. The implications of teaching to encourage professional development are also for teachers to be able to perfect various techniques facing students in the classroom so that they can combine according to their activities. It also ensures that the teacher's conversations are structured and also provides students with the opportunity to practice the language effectively.

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