

An Analysis of Teacher Talk in Teaching EFL Students

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the types of teacher talk used in teaching English procedure text in the classroom. This research approach is qualitative research using a case study design. The non-participant observation was used in the data collection technique. This research was conducted in one of the junior high schools located in a small city, West Java. The participants in this study were ninth-grade English teachers who were not graduates of English education background. The results showed that the types of teacher talk used by teachers in learning procedure text were asking questions, lecture, accepting or using ideas of learners, praising or encouraging, and giving directions. However, there are still lacking in this type of teacher talk, such as type of accepting feelings and criticizing. As an implication, the teacher should use all types of teacher talk, specifically accepting feeling has a function to create a comfortable and safe classroom atmosphere. In order, criticizing has a purpose to manage the students more interested and meaningful in the classroom.

Keywords: *EFL, teachers talk, type of teachers talk.*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher talk is one of the supporting factors in learning process in the classroom. The type of teacher talk is even regarded as a deciding factor in classroom teaching success or failure (Yun & Xing, 2002, pp. 59-68). The way teachers teach in the classroom greatly affects the communication style between individuals with each other. According to Walsh (2002), the choice of language that teachers use, can either increase or decrease student participation and learning in classroom communication. Teacher talk is very useful for students in the classroom because it can have an influence on the interactions that take place. In addition, according to Nunan (1991), teacher talk is critical not only for classroom organization but also for learning processes. The teacher talk supports the learning process that makes the classroom atmosphere active. Moreover, according to Yanfen & Yuqin's (2010), teacher talk is significant because it is an interactive tool that used teachers to instruct linguistic communication and manage classroom activities during the teaching process. It has also been shown to be useful to learners in that it gives them a specific opportunity for more learning, questions and answers, and other activities (Gray, 1997). Therefore, the role of the teacher talk is very important in the continuity of the teaching and learning process in the classroom to make it more effective and interesting.

However, teachers do not understand how to organize teacher talk in class. There are some obstacles in learning process. First, it has been discovered that in EFL classroom, teacher talk dominates the classroom engagement (Flanders, 1970). Second, "The distinctive beliefs and behaviors evident in the social spaces of the classroom" establish the foundation of who has access to learning because of the unique nature of classroom discourse, in which the teacher typically has substantial authority over classroom talk. (Gutiérrez, Rymes, & Larson, 1995). Third, organizational arrangements, conflicting conceptions of assessment, communication gaps, and teacher-student interactions challenges (Hutchison & Jazza, 2007). Forth, teachers may have different views on how best to manage interactions with students (Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998). It can be concluded that there are still many problems in implementing teacher talks in class.

In relation to this, there are several previous studies that serve as a reference in this study. Most of them researched the significant role of teacher talk in managing classroom interaction during unplanned moments of instruction and in building affective teacher-student relationships (Kelly & Smotrova, 2012); (Carey & Heather, 2007); (Hansen & Cooper, 2004); (Ehrlich & Sara, 2011); (Mackey, Gass, & McDonough, 2000). Furthermore, other studies analyzed relationship between teacher talk during whole-classroom discussions and post-discussion, and develop a shared understanding of how writing relates to students learning (Al-Adeimia & O'Connor, 2021); (Teo, 2016); (Chaudron & Richards, 1986). Furthermore, (Inceçay, 2010); (Gharbavi & Irvani, 2014) researched the ways in which teachers, through their choice of language, construct or obstruct learner participation in classroom communication. In addition. (Herzog, Amanda, Kontos, & Susan, 1998); (Leighton, Ford-Connors, Proctor, & Wyatt, 2021); (Helstad & Lund, 2012) investigated strategic teacher talk moves supported multilingual students.

From the previous studies as mentioned above, most of these studies focus on the influence, characteristics, and factors of teacher talk in general. Therefore, this study has another focus that is to investigate teacher talk in teaching of procedural texts for teaching English. The researcher conducted a study with the title “An Analysis of Teacher Talk in Teaching EFL Students”.

METHODS

Since this study aims to investigate types of teacher talk in the classroom setting, the qualitative research with a case study design was used. It is assumed appropriate to use in accordance to Frankael & Wallen (2009) a case study is a qualitative research method that examines a single individual, group, or significant example in order to generate interpretations for the unique situation or to provide valuable generalization. In addition to that this study was carried out in one of the schools in junior high schools involving one English teacher in West Java. This teacher was selected because this teacher has no any English background before, therefore it is unique to be observed. The data were collected by using the non-participant observation since this type of observation is used to identified types of teacher talk in the classroom. The data were then analyzed qualitatively using some stages such as data collection (recording), interpretation, and report writing are all steps in the data analysis process (Creswell, 2009).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part consists of research findings and discussion of this study.

Findings

As the research findings, there are five types of teacher talk found in the classroom, such as;

Asking Questions

The first one is asking the question. This type of teacher talk is dominantly found. For the example, the teacher said “Kemarin kita sampai mana, masih inget nggak?” when the teacher ask about the last week’s learning material, it occurred that do the students still remember about last week’s learning material. Another example of asking question is about procedure text, the teacher said “Kalian pernah dengar apa itu prosedur teks?” it show that the teacher want to know if the student have knew about the procedure text before. And another example is teacher ask about the purposes of procedure text, the teacher said “Tujuan ini biasanya terdapat dalam judul, misalkan ini how to make avocado juice jadi ini tujuannya apa?” it stand that the teacher is curious about the student knowledge about the purposes of procedure text. Another example is about asking the student about the steps in procedure text, the teacher said “Setelah ini ada apalagi?” it means that the teacher

want to know if the students already know about the steps in procedure text. The other example of asking question is the teacher ask about material of procedure text, the teacher said “Kalo mau membuat jus avocado bahan-bahannya apa aja?” it explain that the teacher want to know about the student comprehension about the materials of procedure text. And the last example of asking question is the teacher ask about language features of procedure text, the teacher said “Kalian pernah dengar gak adverb of manner?” it denotes that the teacher want the student’s to understand the language features of procedure text. Those indicate that teacher used ask question type to ask student’s readiness to learn, to ask some material and to ask about student’s understanding.

Lecture

The second type that dominantly found is Lecture. For example the teacher said “Iya gitu ya, jadi penggunaanya simple present untuk teks teks masa sekarang atau kebiasaan, kalau simple past tense bisa tentang masa lampau misalnya pengalaman dan bisa juga legenda atau cerita rakyat biasanya menggunakan simple past tense” it refer to the teacher that give the information about the different between simple present tense and simple past tense. Then, when the teacher said “Jadi teks prosedur adalah teks yang menginformasikan tentang bagaimana cara melakukan membuat sesuatu, menyelesaikan suatu pekerjaan atau kegiatan secara bertahap. Tujuannya adalah untuk menjelaskan bagaimana membuat, melakukan, atau mengoprasikan sesuatu secara bertahap atau langkah demi langkah.” it bring out that the teacher give the student’s knowledge about procedure text. Another example the teacher said “Yang kedua selain menggunakan simple present tense juga kalian menggunakan kalimat perintah” it show that the teacher explain about the language feature in procedure text. The other example is the teacher said “Langkah pertama adalah crack the egg. Crack itu adalah hancurkan telurnya.” it represent that the teacher giving the example of the step in how to make something in procedure text. The last is the teacher said “Untuk selanjutnya, mungkin kita akan membahas procedure text manual. Another example, the teacher said “Contohnya seperti, ketika kita membeli dispenser, magicom biasanya terdapat cara atau langkah-langkah menggunakannya bagaimana.” it denotes that the teacher give the information to the student’s that they are going to learn about how to use something in procedure text. Those indicate that teacher used lecture type to give information and knowledge to students in learning process based on fact.

Accepting or using ideas of learner’s

The third type of teacher talk found is accepting or using ideas of learner’s. For example when the teacher said “Cara or steps, steps itu langkah-langkah” it means that the teacher using the idea of the student’s. Another example is the teacher said “Aim of goal atau tujuan” it show that the teacher accept the idea of the student’s when the student’s answer the teacher question about the structure of procedure text. Another example is when the teacher said “Betul, hancurkan telurnya ke dalam mangkuk.” it refer to the teacher that accept the students answer about the step in procedure text. Those indicate that from the excerpt above we can conclude that student’s answer lead to a new topic being delivered by the teacher and the teacher would to build student response and connect that with teacher’s knowledge.

Praising or Encouraging

The fourth type of teacher talk found is praising or encouraging. For example when the teacher said “Pinter. Secubit garam ya.” it means that the teacher respect and appreciate the student answer. Another example is the teacher said “Nah pintar. Give applause” it means that the teacher want the student to feel respected by giving applause. The last example is the teacher said “Betul, tepuk tangan.” It show that the teacher respect the student’s. Those indicate that teacher used praise type to appreciate and build self-esteem of the students’ in the learning process. This category is

employed to invite students' participation during teaching and learning situation. It is indicated by responses given by the teacher to students' answers.

Giving Direction

The last type of teacher talk found is giving direction. This giving direction is identified in while activity. As the example the teacher said "Ditulis jangan berisik!" it means that the teacher giving direction to the student's for writing and be quiet. Those indicate that teacher used giving direction type to train students to be able to follow the teacher's directing with creating a more conducive classroom atmosphere and from the observation conducted, the teacher always give a clear instructions for his students as well as making sure they understand each instructions.

Based on the data above, in observation the teacher used the type of teacher talk such as ; asking question, lecture, accepting or using ideas of learner's, praise and giving direction. Furthermore, there are still several types of teacher talk that are not used during the learning process, such as; accepting feelings and criticizing or justifying authority.

Discussion

Based on the finding as mention above, asking question is identified. This is relevance to the theory Flanders (1970) that asking question is very important in the classroom. However, it is not followed by the criticizing stage. Mostly, the questions were not merely given to ensure students' understanding of a text. It means that the question are mostly asking about what or yes no question, not digging student's knowledge, experience and the other. It is also relevance to studies Brown (2007) that asking question are found a lot. The teacher also asked the students to elaborate instructions and their progress on the project given which is in line with Brown (2001) that asking questions is a way to stimulate students in speaking up their thought.

Moving to another type of teacher talk is lecture. Lecture have a function to add the knowledge for the student's based on the fact. It is supported by theory Flanders (1970) that lecture it is important part in teaching and learning as it is where all the information is being conveyed to the learners. According to Kaur (2011), correspond with that lecture is defined as a method of teaching by which the instructor gives an oral presentation of facts or principles to learners.

Regarding to the next type is accepting or using the ideas of learners. Accepting or using the ideas of learners has a function to build student response and connect that with teacher's knowledge, so the teacher and students can involve in learning process. According to French and Galloway (1968), pronounce that one of the manners of accepting or using students' ideas is having a classroom discussion regarding students' statement.

The next type is praising or encouraging. Giving praise to students is important because it works to make students feel valued by their teachers, but as a teacher, don't intentionally exaggerate. In accordance with that, Crespo (2002), states that teachers should provide a spontaneous reaction to students' behavior. It is indicated by responses given by the teacher to students' answers. At some points the teacher gave encourages to ensure students have the confidence to convey their thoughts.

The last type is giving direction. Giving direction in learning process it is important because, in giving direction the teacher must give the clear instructions to the students. According to Brown (2001), states that students need directions and facilitations regarding how they should demonstrate the whole ideas they own systematically. From the observation conducted, the teacher always give a clear instructions for his students as well as making sure they understand each instructions.

It can be concluded that during the teaching learning process, the teacher's only use several of teacher talk such as; asking questions, lectures, accepting or using ideas of learners, praise and giving direction. However, according to Flanders (1970) in his Flanders Interaction Analysis Category System (FIACS) there are some of the type that is not used by the teacher during the learning process such as; accepting feeling and criticizing or justifying authority.

However on the type of teacher talk that is not used by the teacher, it turns out to have a function in learning process.

First is accepting feeling. In accepting feeling, teacher nodded or smiled when the teacher seemed to accept the students feeling. This kind of action occurred whenever students are grumbling or mumbling, giving statement of happiness or other things. In the classroom observed, the teacher's acceptance can be seen both from his verbal and non-verbal actions as proposed by French and Galloway (1968). So in this case the teacher must play an important role in creating a comfortable and safe classroom atmosphere, especially regarding the feelings of students. This kind of action makes students feel accepted in Putri (2005) that teacher should provide a safe environment for learning and it includes accepting students' feelings.

Second is criticizing or justifying authority. In this type the teacher has the capability to manage and be assertive of what can and cannot be done in the classroom. However, teachers should keep in mind that critics given should not be harsh as it can leave bad effect for students (Gharbavi & Iravani, 2014). Amidon (1996), states that criticism or justified authority is utilized typically to change pupils' behavior. The teacher showed that classroom management is indeed needed to conduct successful teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, there are five types of teacher talks found in the classroom, the types found asking questions, lecturers, accepting or using ideas of learners, praise and giving direction. However, there are two types of teacher talk that are not used by the teacher during the learning process, such as accepting feelings and criticizing or justifying authority. In fact, both types of teacher talk are very useful in the learning process. Moreover, the dominant type found in the class was asking questions, while the less common type found in the class was praise or encouragement. It can be concluded that the teacher actively asks questions to students and the students actively answer the questions, this shows that the teacher's talk used by the teacher in the classroom is useful for the continuity of interaction between the teacher and students in the classroom. In addition, because there were five types of teacher talk found, this shows that the teacher realized the benefits of teacher talk, for making the classroom less boring because there was interaction between students and teachers.

Suggestion

After seeing the finding as well as discussion, the researcher gives suggestion may be useful for teacher and also for the other researcher who will conduct the same topic in the research:

1. For the English teacher in providing teacher talk in the classroom, the teacher should use the other type of teacher talk such as; accepting feeling and criticizing or justifying authority in the classroom. Because, it is so important to know the feeling of students and to train student's habit not to criticize each other. As for other suggestions, it is better for English teacher to get used to using English compared to other languages in other to practice English skills and increase vocabulary for teacher. Therefore, in order to enhance students' proficiency, teachers should aim to use appropriate language when setting up an interactive learning environment. Through practice in the classroom, teachers should work to develop clear, grammatically correct English.
2. For the researcher, the researcher should observe several meetings to monitor the progress of teachers and students also get more complete data. And also the study can help researchers and students who intend to conduct research on the same hypothesis of distinct sorts of teacher speak in other fields. It implies that are results of this study can be a starting point for additional research. Because the observer uses the procedure text as the foundation for this study, the result could differ if the following researcher uses a different text.

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