CLASSROOM INTERACTION IN THE TEACHING OF SPEAKING FOR THE EIGHTH GRADERS AT *MTs SURYA BUANA MALANG*

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Abstract

The goal of teaching including teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills. To achieve the goal, students in their learning speaking should be provided a lot of opportunities to communicate using the target language with both their teacher and other students. Therefore, the activities which occur in the classroom that intend to improve speaking abilities should be presented in interaction. In order to make the classroom interactions more effective, the importance of teacher talk is vital since the organization of the classroom and the process of acquisition are achieved through the teacher talk. This study finds that there are some categories of teacher talk and student talk in the teaching of speaking.

Key words: Classroom interaction, speaking, teacher talk, student talk, patterns of interaction.

Speaking has an important place in teaching and learning English based on the objectives of the teaching and learning English at junior High school. Nunan (1991:41) points that mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second language or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation. In learning speaking, students should provide a lot of opportunities to communicate using the target language with both their teacher and other students. By practicing, later on, their speaking skill will be improved. Therefore, the activities which occur in the classroom that intend to improve speaking abilities should be presented in "interaction" as when the students learn to communicate, listen to others, talk with others, and negotiate meaning in a shared context.

Brown (2001:165) defines interaction as "the collaborative exchange of thought, feelings or ideas between two or more people resulting in a reciprocal effect each

other". Further, he explains that in the era of communicative language, interaction is the heart of communication. Furthermore, Rivers (1981:4) states that through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material or even the output of their fellow students in discussions, skits, join problem solving tasks, or dialogue journals. In interaction, students can make use of all they possess of the language in real –life exchanges. As the result, students can develop both language learning and social skill because they have to communicate with the others using target language.

If we talk about classroom interactions, we should also talk about some of its aspects, i.e., they are teacher talk and patterns of interaction. In order to make the classroom interactions more effective, the importance of teacher talk is vital. Nunan (1991: 189) states that both the organization of the classroom and the process of acquisition are achieved through the teacher talk. It is through the language that teachers either succeed or fail to implement their teaching plans. Furthermore, teacher talk is probably the major source of comprehensible target language input for the students. Therefore, the teacher should make his/her speech understandable and become comprehensible input for the students.   One way to look at the teacher and the students' role in classroom interactions is to look at a well known taxonomy for describing classroom interaction. Flanders (1970) and Moskowitz (1971) as quoted by Brown (2001:170) propose some categories for observation classroom interactions known as FLINT (Foreign Language Interaction). It can be seen in table 1 in Appendix.

Concerning the patterns of interactions, Byrne (1987:2) states that there are two approaches dealing with the patterns of classroom interaction. First, it is whole class which means that there are interactions between the teacher and the students. This model allows the teacher to provide guidance and inspiration, decide what questions to ask and how to ask them, and create learning situations that stimulate students to listen, read, write, discuss, ask questions, perform tasks, solve problems or engage in other activities. The activities in this model

focus on accuracy activities. Second, it is pairs and group model. In contrast with the first one, it focuses on learner-centered in which students nominate topic of interest and fluency activities become primary concern to be conducted in the classroom. Therefore, the teacher should have a plan of activity to be applied in the classroom which promotes students' interaction.

The descriptive case study design was adopted in this study because it investigates the classroom interaction in the teaching of speaking for the eighth graders at *MTs Surya Buana Malang*. This school has own system which differs from others. It applies the full day system (FDS) which based on *Pondok Pesantrn Modern Surya Buana.*. The study was held from 4th of November 2008 to 20th of November 2008. The subjects of this study were the English teacher and the students of grade VIII A at *MTs Surya Buana Malang*. Since the study is a descriptive case study, the instruments of the study are a cassette recorder, an interview guide, and field notes.

There were some steps that the researcher did in analyzing the data based on procedures that are suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984:21). The Procedures of the data analysis consisted data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The first procedure was the data reduction in which the researcher transcribed the row data into the written form after collecting the data from main data (the utterances produced by both the teacher and the students during the classroom interactions and also the detailed information about the patterns of classroom interaction) and the data from interviewing the teacher and the students using the recorder. The next procedure was the data display. Here, the data that were displayed were the recorded data which have been transcribed. The transcribed data were then entered into the table. The last procedure was the conclusion drawing. In this case, the researcher decided what things meant and noted regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and proposition until final conclusion could be gained.

The Result

Based on the study, there are some points that can be seen in the process of teaching and learning speaking at *MTs Surya Buana Malang*. First, in the teaching-learning of speaking the teacher employed all categories of teacher talk in FLINT Model. Those categories are (1) dealing with feelings (DwF), (2) praising or encouraging (PoE), (3) joking (Jok), (4) using ideas of students (Uis), (5) repeating student response verbatim (RSRV), (6) asking question (AQ), (7) giving information (GF), (8) correcting without rejection (CwR), (9) giving direction (GD), (10) criticizing student behavior (CSB), (11) criticizing student response (CSR), (12) Laughing (Laug) (13) using the native language (UNL), and (14) non-verbal language. In stimulating the students to be more active during the process of teaching and learning, the teacher applies questioning strategy (AQ). It is because the teacher wants to encourage the students while the students are too shy to express their idea. The teacher talk in giving question sometimes is combined with the use of the native language. The teacher often translates what she has talked about into the native language since she thinks that her student get confused. In fact, based on the students' interview it is found that they understand the teacher's utterances. Therefore, the teacher should simplify her talk such as the use of repetition, paraphrase the sentence rather than translates it into the native language directly.

Second, there are several characteristics of the student-talk during the teaching-learning of speaking. The characteristics of student talk are (1) student response, specific (SRS), (2) student response, open-ended (SRO), (3) silence (Sil), (4) laughing (laug), and (6) uses the native language (UNL). The student talk in responding to the teacher talk with the specific respond (SRS) appears more frequently than the other categories. It is due to the questions which are asked by the teacher need a reply from the students with the specific response rather than the open-ended response. Second, the student talk categories (SRS and SRO) often occur in the content phase of the interaction.

Therefore, it can be said that there is no almost the first initiation from the students and they just respond to the teacher question or direction. In addition, the students often combine the use of the native language and the students' open-ended response as they are only eager to express their ideas and though using the skilled language. However, they tend to use English in answering in specific responses.

Third, there are three patterns of interactions that occur in this study. Those are: (1) teacher-whole class (T-SS), (2) teacher-student (T-S), and (3) student-student (S-S). From those patterns of classroom interaction, the interaction between the teacher and the individual student appears more frequently over the others. This pattern exists as the teacher often makes initiation of the interaction by asking the question to the individual student.

In summary, the results of the study support the existing theories of the classroom interaction as well as the previous studies. The results of this study which relate to the research problem number one strengthen the previous studies that

the teacher uses categories of the teacher as shown in FLINT system to stimulate the interaction. Specifically, the teacher applies a questioning strategy to initiate the interaction. It also supports the theory which is proposed by Brown (2001). The theory reveals that one of the best ways to develop the role of the teacher is to develop a repertoire of questioning strategies (Brown,2001:169). Furthermore, the results of the study which relate to the research problem number three stand behind the theory of patterns of classroom interaction which is proposed by Byrne (1987). The patterns of classroom interaction occur in three forms. They are teacher-whole (T-SS), teacher-student (T-S), and student-student (S-S).

In relation to the results of the findings and discussions, some suggestions are proposed. First, the teacher is suggested to apply a teaching technique which supports the classroom interaction. It means that the teacher should find various interactive activities to make the student speak up in the classroom such as mini-role play, discussion in

small groups, etc. Second, the teacher is suggested to give more a kind of referential question in which requires critical thinking of the fact. By doing that, the students will be stimulated to think in answering the questions. Third, it is better for the teacher to use English or make a modification of the speech to make the students understand the question without translating it into Indonesia since it is an English speaking class. The use of the native language in giving question will influence the response from the students that is they will use the native language too. On the other hand, if the teacher uses English in the whole session during the class activities it will give the students more opportunities to practice the language. Fourth, the students should be more creative in thinking by using open-ended response (SRO) in the teaching and learning process. Fifth, for the school management of *MTs Surya Buana Malang,* the study is expected to contribute beneficial information for the improvement of the quality of learning-teaching English especially in the teaching of speaking.

There are several limitations of the study. First, it was conducted in limited class meetings of the teaching speaking in the first semester. Second, it was used only one tape recorder which was laid in front of the class during the teaching and learning speaking. Therefore, it is suggested for further researcher to conduct the same study, majoring in the questioning strategy that is used by the teacher to stimulate the interaction using more tape recorders or video tape recorder as well.

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APPENDIX

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Table 1. Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT) System (Adapted from
Moskowitz 1971)

TEACHER TALK	INDIRECT INFLUENCE	1. Dealing with feelings: in a non-threatening way, accepting, discussion, referring to, or communication understanding of past, present, or future feelings of the students. 2. Praises or encourages: Praising, complementing, telling students why what they have said or done is valued. Encouraging students to continue, trying to give them confidence, confirming that answers are correct. 2a. Jokes: Intentional joking, kidding, making puns, attempting to be humorous, providing the joking is not at anyone's expense. (Unintentional humor is not included in this category). 3. Uses idea of students: Clarifying, using, interpreting, and summarizing the ideas of students. The ideas must be rephrased by the teacher but still be recognized as being student contributions. 3a. Repeats student response verbatim: repeating the exact words of students after they participate. 4. Ask questions: asking questions to which the answer is anticipated. (Rhetorical question are not included in this category)
	DIRECT INFLUENCE	5. Gives information: Giving information, facts, own opinion, or ideas: lecturing or asking rhetorical questions. 5a. Correct without rejection: Telling students who have made a mistake the correct response without using words or intonation which communicate criticism. 6. Gives directions: Giving directions, requests, or commands that students are expected to follow; directing various drills; facilitating whole-class and small-group activity. 7. Criticizes students behavior; communicating anger, displeasure, annoyance, dissatisfaction with what students are doing. 7a. Criticizes student response: Telling the student his or her response is not correct or acceptance and communicating criticism, displeasure, annoyance, rejection by words or intonation.
STUDENT TALK		8. Student response, specific: responding to the teacher within a specific and limited range of available or previously practiced answers. Reading aloud, dictation, drills 9. Student response, open ended or student-initiated: Responding to the teacher with students' own ideas, opinions, reactions, feelings. Giving one from among many possible answers that have been previously practiced but from which students must know make a selection. Initiating the participation.

		10. Silence: Pauses in the interaction. Periods of quiet during which there is no verbal interaction.
		10a. Silence-AV: Silence in the interaction during which a piece of audiovisual equipment, e.g., a tape recorder, filmstrip projector, record player, etc, is being used to communicate.
		11. Confusion, work-oriented: More than one person at a time talking, so the interaction cannot be recorded. Students calling out excitedly, eager to participate or respond, concerned with the task at hand.
		11a. Confusion, non-work-oriented: more than one person at a time talking so the interaction cannot be recorded. Students out of order, not behaving as the teacher wishes, not concerned with the task at hand.
		12. Laughter: Laughing and giggling by the class, individuals, and/or the teacher.
		13. Uses the native languages: Use of the native language by the teacher or the students. This category is always combined with one of the categories from 1 to 9
		14. Nonverbal: Gestures or facial expressions by the teacher or the student that communicate without the use of words. This category is always combined with one of the categories of teacher or student behavior.