# SPEECH FUNCTIONS OF TEACHER TALK IN CLASSROOM INTERACTION IN POLITEKNIK HARAPAN BERSAMA TEGAL

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#### Abstract:

Interactions in the college non-English major are supposed to be different from the college with English major. The teacher might use bilingual (Bahasa Indonesia and English) for the whole interactions with the purpose that the students can understand what the teacher said. This study was conducted to explain the application of Sinclair and Coulthard's IRF model which occured in teacher talk in classroom interaction. A case study was applied in this study which had been conducted at the second semester of computer program in *Politeknik Harapan Bersama* Tegal. The result of the study showed that the interaction in the classroom is dominated by teachers. This domination is mostly influenced by social status of the interaction participants. It can be also concluded that the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students in a classroom are more influenced by the power dimension. Meanwhile, contact and emotion dimension do not give significant impact toward the process of interaction between teachers and students in classroom. It can be interpreted that as the authoritative persons who have more access in knowledge and education (expertise), teachers keep maintaining their status by showing their domination in the interaction process.

Kkeywords: Classroom Interaction, Power Relation, Speech Function, Teacher Talk

## INTRODUCTION

Speaking is very important and it seems that it is more demanding in the language teaching and learning. Speaking has closed relationship with the communication and interaction because one of the functions of language is for communication. However, it is indicated that students are not able to express their ideas because they do not speak fluently and they are not able to pronounce the word clearly. This problem may be caused by the fact that the students and the teacher do not interact frequently and effectively in the classroom.

Additionally, EFL students are required to practice the language in the classroom as much as possible. The more they practiced, the more they had skill and self-confident in using the language. A common problem for EFL teachers is dealing with a passive class, where students are unresponsive and avoid interaction with the teacher. The students seem shy or lazy

to ask a question to the teacher. Sometimes a teacher seeks interaction in a teaching learning process, such as asking questions to the class as a whole, expecting at least one student to respond. Obviously, there will be times when no student can answer a teacher's question, but often students do not answer even if they understand the question, know the answer, and are able to produce the answer.

Interaction in the classroom is an essential part of teaching learning process. Interaction or human interaction has been defined as a process whereby two or more people engaged in reciprocal actions. This action may be verbal or nonverbal (Celce-Murcia, 1987). Interactions in the college non-English major are supposed to be different from the college with English major. The teacher might use bilingual (Bahasa Indonesia and English) for the whole interactions with the purpose that the students can understand what the teacher said.

Classroom interaction relates to teachers' teaching style that determine the classroom interaction occuring in the classroom. Teachers' teaching style like teacher-centered will make the students passive in the classroom since the teacher talks all the time. It means that the teachers do not give chance to the students to talk. Teaching English in *Politeknik Harapan Bersama* Tegal still use bilingual in explaining the material, because most of students having lack of understanding in English, both spoken and written. The teaching style used by teacher is teacher-centered where most of teaching learning process dominates by the teacher. The teacher dominates the interaction because he/she tends to initiate the interaction first, explain grammatical rules, and controlled students talk. Moreover, the efficient communication between teacher and students are rare. In contrast, (Yuliasri 2017) suggests that students centered will make the students active since the teacher is as a facilitator. Making the students active related to the researcher's reason in choosing the topic of this study.

Classroom interaction that is intended in this study is how the teacher and students participate to talk during teaching learning process. In fact, according to (Kundu 1993), (Musumeci 1996), and (Chaudron 1988) cited in (Tuan and Nhu 2010), teacher talk is dominant in classroom interaction. Teacher talk is an essential part in EFL clasroom interaction. (As Nunan 1991) said, teacher talk is crucial importance, not only for the organization of the classroom but also for the proces of acquisition. It is important for the organization and management of the classroom because it is through language that teachers either succeed or fail in implementing their teaching plans. In terms of acquisition, teacher talk is important because it is probably the major source of comprehensible target language the learner is likely to receive.

The analysis of classroom discourse is a very important form which classroom process research has taken. The present study focused on college English classroom discourse. Through a detailed description and analysis of the collected data by referring to Sinclair and Coulthard's classroom discourse analysis model, the problem of patterns of the classroom discourse is made clear and on the basis of which a few strategies for college English teachers are put forward by the researcher in order to improve college English teaching and learning. The investigation on the structural organization of classroom talk has been conducted by many researchers. The classic investigation of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) showed that there are acts, moves, exchanges, and transactions in all talk in teacher-students interaction. The basic unit of teacherstudent communication in this system is the 'IRF exchange', in which a teacher Initiates an interaction (typically by asking a question), the student Response (usually by providing an answer), and the teacher then provides some Follow-up or feedback (for example, by confirming that the answer was correct). Initiation Response Feedback (IRF) model is a model of classroom interaction which provides guidance for analyzing spoken language, which was developed from classroom interaction (McCarthy, 2002). Thus, I used Sinclair and Coulthard Initiation Response Feedback (IRF) model as guidance for analyzing teacher and student interaction. The IRF exchange was also identified at about the same time by Mehan (1979), who called it an 'IRE' (with 'E' standing for 'evaluation'). Cazden (2001) cited in Faruji (2011),

claimed that the previous pattern of classroom discourse; Initiation, Response, and Evaluation (IRE) have been the "default pattern" or the "unmarked" one which seems to be natural at least to some teachers.

In the classroom interaction, the power between teacher and student do exist. The power relation can be seen through the interpersonal relationship. The term "interpersonal utterance", is referred to as something that a speaker says in order to convey a certain interpesonal function (Mujiyanto, 2017). The interpersonal metafunction is a resource for enacting social roles and relationships between speaker/writer and listener/reader (Matthiessen 1995). This study is therefore expected to examine how relationships are established and maintained in the teacher and student talk.

Tenor is the role of relationship between the interactants. Poynton, (in Eggins, 1994) states that tenor can be broken down into three different continua: power, affective involvement, and contact. Power is a matter of equal and unequal power of the roles of the interactants in communication, contact deals with frequency of communication between the interactants. It is whether they have frequent or infrequent interaction. Affective involvement describes the emotional relationship between the interactants in a particular situation. The affective involvement is either high or low. Tenor is the projection of interpersonal meaning and realized through the interpersonal metafunction in language (Martin, 1992).

In this study, I analyzed speech functions that were related to the teachers' power in the classroom interaction. This data was analyzed by using the theory of power stated by (Fairclough 1989). In his example of interaction between doctor and medical students, he explained that the students did not appear to involve any direct control being exercised by the doctor. Power is the the authority or right when people interacted with someone else, for example, interaction between teacher and student. (Fairclough 1989) gave an example between doctor and medical student. He found that doctor used directive speech act of asking the question because he/she has right to ask a question and the students have only obligation to comply and answer the question.

Based on the issues above, this study focused on Initiation, Response, and Feedback (IRF) pattern by (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) to analyze teacher-student interaction in classroom and the analysis of power relation between teacher and student talk in classroom interaction. I conducted this study at computer program in *Politeknik Harapan Bersama* Tegal. Since this program has English subject as one of basic general subjects, so it is hoped that the students can participate by responding teacher during teaching learning process. Citations should be written using a bodynote format such as (Uwuigbe & Ajibolade, 2013), (Wang, 2016), (Muttakin et al., 2015) and relevant to the bibliography/bibliography (recommended using the Mendeley Application).

## **RESEARCH METHOD [500-1000 words]**

This study aims to explain the ways in which speech functions are used in teacher - student talk in classroom interaction, to explain the power relation between teacher and student talk in classroom interaction and to explain the factors influencing the relation between teacher and student talk in classroom interaction.

In order to fulfill this aim, I used case study as research design. In this study I described the case of teacher and student talk in classroom interaction. (Cresswell 2003) defines a case study as a study which explores processes, activities, and events. Since the present study was concern with the activities in classroom interaction, case study design would be appropriate to be conducted in this study.

This research was conducted in *Politeknik Harapan Bersama* Tegal. There were two classes of computer program at the academic year 2015-2016 when this research was conducted. This research was planned to be conducted in the second semester of the year and took about three months to collect the data, starting from April – June 2016.

The participants under study were the English teachers and the second semester students of computer program in *Politeknik Harapan Bersama* Tegal. There were two teachers under the observation who have different age and different teaching experience.

The data in this study were the recording files of the utterances produce by teacher and students in classroom interaction. These data were qualitative which is formed in recording file belonged to audiovisual materials. According to (Cresswell 2012), audiovisual materials consist of images or sounds that researchers collect to help them understand the central phenomenon under study.

The data analysis was done through some steps. Firstly, I transcribed the data which had been recorded by video records into written form then completed them with the transcription code. Secondly, I classified the data into teacher inform, teacher direct, teacher elicit, student elicit, student direct, and check. Thirdly, I reduced the data which is appropriate to the Sinclair and Coulhard's pattern. Fourthly, I interpreted the data from the data being reduced before. Lastly, I drew inference based on the interpretation results yielded from the previous steps.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION [500 to 1000 words]**

(Presenting data, facts-what you find, calculate, find, observe)

## A. Research Results

This section will follow the statement of the research objectives.

**Table 1:** Results of Speech Functions

Speech Function	Speech Function Initiation Move	in	Speech Function in Response Move	Speech Function in Feedback Move
	23,31 %		27,89%	20,62%

## **B. Discussion [1000 -1500 words]**

# Discourse Structure Patterns Used by the Teacher to Interact Interpersonally with the Students

To interact interpersonally with the students, the teacher followed the discourse structure patterns which show how participants choose to act on each other through their choice of speech function (i.e. speech acts). The choice of speech function is a key resource for negotiating degrees of familiarity. If interactants wish to explore their interpersonal relations, they must choose speech functions which keep the conversation going, and this frequently means that intimate relations involve interactants reacting to each other in confronting, rather than supporting, moves (Eggins&Slade 1997). Based on Halliday (1994), the speech functions are classified into: Statement, Offer, Question, and Command.

#### Statement

Statement occurs when the speaker usually wants to give information to the interlocutor. Here the teacher used this type of speech function repeatedly in communicating with the students. For example:

(1) T: Okay, class. Good morning

SSS: Morning, mam.

T : So it is the new material, and then the third material is about question and answer, *kalau* you *bisa lihat kemarin materi saya yang sesuai silabus* ... (if you see the material in the syllabus)

S : Question and answer

T: Yes, the third material is about question and answer, this is an easy sentence.

Most of the statements of the teacher above function to initiate dialogue to the students. This kind of speech function basically was good strategy to use and worked well to initiate the students to speak. As Halliday's notion of speech roles implies, the choice of responding moves is constrained by the initiating move that has just been made. Every time speakers take on a role, they assign to the listener(s) a role as well. Every time a speaker initiates an interaction, the listener is put into a role of Responding if they want to interact.

## Offer

Offer occurs when the speaker usually wants to give goods and services to the interlocutor. Here the teacher used this type of speech function repeatedly in communicating with the students. For example:

(2) T: Okay, you have to say this sentence to your friend in the first line in your own group by whispering, then he/she should do the same to the next person. Okay?

SSS: Okay, mam.

By using this speech function, the teacher offered the students to interact and to communicate. This worked well sometimes since the students proven following the teacher instruction.

## **Ouestion**

Question occurs when the speaker demands information from the interlocutor. Yet, here, the teacher addressed questions to students not only to ask information but also to elicit students to take part in the teaching and learning process. This was very good strategy since by addressing question to the students, the teacher could also ask the students to think and to express their ideas by answering the questions. Here are examples of the questions addressed by the teacher to the students:

(3) T : Okay, let's check it. This is from group one. Who's the captain?

Ss : Lulu

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T : Okay, please share with us about the article. Only four sentences. What is the importance for education related to the article?

S : Help student in learn

T : So, according to the article, technology helps students to learn.

We could see that questioning could be the strategy for the teacher to communicate with the students. This would be better if the teacher could address some additional questions to the students so that the students could use that layer question to gain more understanding. Yet, from the transcript, I saw that the teacher gave lot of number of questions to the students and these helpful for them to communicate.

## Command

Command occurs when the speaker demands goods or services from the interlocutor. Here are examples of command in the transcript:

(4) T: Malam ini kita latihan. Saya kasih kamu soal, buatlah pertanyaan dari pernyataan yang saya tulis. (this meeting we have exercises, make the questions based on the statements given)

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T: Okay if you finish, submit to me and you go back.

The link between speech function and context is that the social role that participants are occupying in an interaction will constrain the speech functions they have access to when interacting with specific others (Eggins&Slade, 1997). Thus, the social role of the teacher here gave access to the full range of initiating speech functions when interacting with the students while the social role of the students places constraints on both the frequency and types of initiations that can be made to the teacher (and to other students). Sometimes, the teacher used declarative instead of interrogative clauses to address the students questions as in this following example:

- (5) T : So it is the new material, and then the third material is about question and answer, *kalau* you *bisa lihat kemarin materi saya yang sesuai silabus* ... (if you see the material in the syllabus)
  - S : Question and answer

The examples above show that the declarative used by the teacher as the incongruent ways of demanding the student's agreement. This, again, show that the power relations among the teacher and the students are clearly dominated by the teacher. In this use, imperatives position the teacher as having some power over the students. In accordance with the main function of imperative, the use of those incongruent realizations of speech function were no longer have anything to do with question but to show the authority or power of the teacher.

## The Power Relation between Teacher and Students Talk in Classroom Interaction

The interaction between teacher and students can be seen through their language practices in the process of teaching and learning. The initial discussion of tenor has defined that tenor is referred to "the social role relationship played by interactans" (Eggins, 1994), for instance, the roles between the teacher and students in classroom interaction.

The concept of tenor shows interpersonal values of three dimensions. (Gerot and Wignell 1994) identify tenor into power, contact, and affect. The analysis of Mood choices can reveal tension between equality and difference as interactants enact and construct relations of power through talk (Eggins&Slade, 1997). The type of relationship between the teacher and students in this study was like usual role relationship among them in academic setting. This means that authority of the teacher was still paramount and dominating issue. This was so common since this happened in academic setting.

The result of the analysis shows that the teacher dominated the teaching and learning process. The total exchanges produced were 939 exchanges and around 69% of them produced by the teacher. Meanwhile, the students only produced around 31%. I display diagram above in order to give a general description about the real situation of the teaching learning process under this study and as evidence of my finding which says that, generally, the role relationship among the teacher and the students are exactly the relationship between teacher and students. More detailed information due to the power relation among the teacher and the students are described in this chapter.

During the teaching and learning process, both parties, the teacher and the students produced clauses. I separated the clause produced by the teacher from those produced by the students in order to give more detailed information due to the type of clauses which then ended up with role relationship description among them. Overall, the teacher produced 170 declarative clauses, 150 interrogative clauses, and 42 imperative clauses. Mostly, the teacher used declarative clauses. In general, this showed that the power of the teacher here was very dominant since using declaratives show that the teacher was the one who gave the information and at the same time put the students as the one who received that information.

# Factors Influencing the Relations between Teacher and Students Talk in Classroom Interaction

I analyzed why the students had problems or lose the turn in responding a given move offered by the teacher. It might be influenced by the students' sociocultural competence that involves all interactants role and an understanding of social context. Besides, interpersonal negotiation involves looking at what kinds of role relation and how they negotiate to take turn. Since the conversations I analyzed were between a teacher and students in classrooms, I could explain that the students think they have unequal power. They do not have the same right to talk for the sake of politeness. They just wait when the teacher appoints them to talk. This finding is similar to (Sudar and Sutopo 2013) research. They found that the English teachers still dominant to produce their utterances in classroom.

The problem in this case deals with freedom to talk which is affected by unequal power. The findings above extremely affected the improvement of the students' actional competence, because they did not feel free to use linguistic forms to achieve the function of language.

Cate Poynton suggests that interpersonal relationships can be analyzed along three dimensions: power, contact and emotion. To sum up, we can think of interpersonal relationships as depending on Contact (horizontal social distance), Power (vertical social distance), and the kind and amount of emotion expressed. Emotion is partially dependent upon the Contact and Power dimensions; we tend not to express strong emotion to people of higher status or Power, or those who are distant on the horizontal axis. The expression of emotion will often in itself be an attempt to change the horizontal distance between discourse participants.

#### **Power**

From the data taken in this research, it can be seen that all commands with imperative mood are performed by the teachers. It means that teachers are having more demanding than students. In this case, students are not having demand to teachers.

From the data analysis above, it can be summarized that teachers perform command to maintain their status as teacher who have authority to control the class. Such control is persisted by forcing students to do what is expected by teacher. It means that this kind of interaction emphasizes on status and authority of the teacher who can force the other participant of interaction (students) to act or behave as expected in classroom. As less powerful participant in the classroom interaction, students tend to realize their status in classroom that has no authority in the teaching process. That is why all commands are only performed by teachers. It would be strange for students to demand commands for their teachers which are considered as more powerful participant in the interaction.

Next, the most direct way of demanding verbal behavior of a listener is to use questions, technically the interrogative mood. The effect of interrogatives on interpersonal relationships is not as clear as in the case of commands. On the one hand, on the Power dimension, questioning assumes authority, the right of the speaker to demand information from the listener. On the other hand, a typical question assumes that the speaker possesses knowledge which the speaker does not have but wishes to have.

In the data, it can be found that teachers produced 211 questions in their utterances. Most questions are initiated by teachers. Students only perform 3 questions of the total utterances. As stated previously above, on the Power dimension, questioning assumes authority, the right of the speaker to demand information from the listener. In this case, teachers have the authority as the expert of the subject lesson that can manage the situation in the classroom to demand information from students. By dominating in giving questions to students can be assumed that teachers possess knowledge which they do not have but wishes to have. Probably, it is a way of introducing or stimulating interest in an issue or discourse topic in the classroom.

## **Contact**

The contact dimension depends on the frequency and duration of meeting talking face to face. It is clear enough that there is a contact between teachers and students in the classroom in everyday meeting. Yet, in order to reveal the contact dimension, we have to analyze the interaction process in the form of transcribed conversation. Such transcription will be a written text that would be easier to analyze to see the contact dimension. On the other word, a written text which gives the flavour of speech will be more personal and stimulate some degree of contact. In order to analyze the contact dimension from the transcribed conversation, I use one linguistic device which is related to the imitation of dialogic speech, which is the use of incomplete sentences, technically, minor sentences.

Minor sentences are stretches of text punctuated as sentences but with the main verb or subject missed out. In dialogue (classroom interaction), obviously, such utterances or sentences occur quite naturally, for example in response to questions. When an utterance is incomplete, as in answers to questions or minor sentences, then the reader/hearer has to supply the missing information. This will either come from the previous question or from knowledge brought to the transcribed interaction brought by the hearer. Incomplete sentences assume that speaker (teacher) and hearer (student) share a good deal of information which does not need to be explicitly spelled out. It can be further assumed that between teacher and student there is a high level of contact. It means that teacher (as speaker) and student (as hearer) are having high frequency and duration of interaction in classroom. It is obvious because they always meet every day in the teaching process.

# **Affective Involvement**

In the data, it can be found that teachers use more positive and neutral spin than negative spin. It is proved from the use of words in which there is no negative spin found in the data. This is probably because the situation is more formal in classroom or even teachers realize their position in front of the classroom. For that reason, they tend to use many positive and neutral spin in teaching process.

Second, a further aspect of emotive meaning is euphemisms, words used to avoid a direct reference to something considered impolite. There is no data that show about euphemism found. It seems that teachers tend to use positive or neutral spin. Probably this is because they want to create positive emotion with students or the condition in classroom is comfortable for them to show positive emotion.

The data above may perform positive emotion from teachers in teaching process. They tend to use positive and neutral spin by conceptualizing the concept of what is being spoken. For instance, the teacher uses words 'kayak mbah Surip bilang (like mbah Surip said)' to give explanation to student about parts of speech. On the other hand, students give positive response towards teacher's way by laughing and singing as response to the statement.

However, there are also several data found in this research that show contrastive attitude in the process of interaction. It can be revealed through high intonation performed by teachers in giving commands to students. Such intonation can be identified through some stresses uttered by teachers in demanding command. Such intonation may lead to an interpretation that teachers want to be obeyed by student and expect to get quick response. As strongest demand, command need to get quick response, for instance, when teacher ask to the students to submit their tasks. For that reason, in this context, it can be assumed that teachers are performing negative emotion when they are giving command.

#### **CONCLUSION**

From the result of analysis about the use of speech functions, it can be concluded that the interaction in the classroom is dominated by teachers. This domination is mostly influenced by social status of the interaction participant. Teachers become dominant participant in the classroom who is more authoritative (managerial and knowledge) because they have more power than student. It can be seen that by dominating the initiation process teachers want to create one way communication in teaching process in the classroom.

After examining the conversations particularly, the moves produced by the teachers and the students, I find that in all conversations the teachers are the one who always initiates to open the conversations. In this case the teacher produced opening moves which function to show that the conversation is about to begin. None of the greeting is started by the students. The problem is likely to be caused by power and atmosphere. The teacher and the students do not have equal power and the atmosphere is quite formal. In formal atmosphere, someone who has less power, in this case, students usually let someone who has more power, the teacher take turn to speak first

From the data analysis, it can be also concluded that the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students in classroom are more influenced by the power dimension. Meanwhile, contact and emotion dimension do not give significant impact toward the process of interaction between teachers and students in classroom. Further, it can be concluded that teachers mostly demonstrate their power by regulating behaviour through the use of commands and questions. Mostly data show that teachers use high degree in producing commands. For that reason, it can be interpreted that as the authoritative persons who have more access in knowledge and education (expertise), teachers keep maintaining their status by showing their domination in the interaction process. This may create on the communicative problem in the interaction in which students are more passive in the classroom

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