



## **EFL CLASSROOM DISCOURSE; FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND CONVERSATION ANALYSIS**

**Dian Mega Putri**  
**STKIP PGRI Sumatera Barat**  
**E-mail: [dianmega25januari@gmail.com](mailto:dianmega25januari@gmail.com)**

**Submit: 07-02-2017 Review: 24-02-2018 Accepted: 10-03-2018**

**DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22202/tus.2018.v4i1.2387>**

### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to analyze the EFL classroom discourse by investigating the terms of IRF (Initiation, Response, and Feedback) structures, turn taking, conversational repair and repetition. The subjects were two English teachers and their students from different schools SMKN 10 and SMA Adabiah Padang. The data was collected from classroom recording. The recordings were taken in one meeting for each teacher. There are four findings in this research. First, the discourse structure in EFL classroom is more complex than single IRF model which also includes the IRFR structure, the IR [IIR1 ... (InRn)] F structure and the IR1F1R2F2 ... RnFn structure. Second, students in EFL classroom rarely initiate the conversation, and usually take the turn by nomination. Third, it is found that repairs are frequently adopted by the teacher and students to cope with problems in speaking, hearing and understanding. Fourth, repetition frequently occurs in EFL classroom, and teachers usually use repetition to emphasize or guide students to complete utterance, and students usually repeat part or all teachers' utterance to show their confirmation or doubts. In conclusion most of the interaction in the EFL classroom is from the teacher to the students, there is little student initiative and little student-student interaction.

**Keywords: Classroom Discourse, Conversation Analysis, Discourse Analysis,  
EFL**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Discourse analysis, as a new discipline in modern linguistics, develops rapidly and becoming an important research field. Many researchers have made fruitful research on discourse from various perspectives. Thereafter, the importance of classroom discourse especially in the research of EFL classroom wins increasingly wide recognition and more and more researchers started to focus their studies on classroom discourse. Discourse analysis and conversation analysis are the most influential theoretical frameworks and analytical instruments. Discourse analysis aims to analyze the total picture of natural communication, examining the structural features in the unit of discourse. In



conversation analysis, the emphasis is on the close observation of the specific behaviors of participants in interaction which recur over a wide range of natural communication.

In the language teaching context, the study of classroom discourse especially related with discourse and conversation analysis can help the language teachers to run the language and teaching process well. Moreover, the analysis of classroom discourse can help language teachers to reach a kind of heightened awareness and understanding of classroom interaction. For example, important findings from conversation analysis can help teachers to unveil the turn-taking system of classroom interaction so that they may in turn help both language teachers and learners to map out invisible rules of behavior of supporting teacher-students interaction; can assist teachers to offer learners a more specific, more situated, and more complex picture of how sequencing works; and also can help language teachers to develop a solid understanding of conversation repair in order to reach out to learners in a variety of ways.

There are many variations of classroom discourse structures (pattern of IRF structures) and classroom interactional skills (turn taking, conversational repairs and repetition) that can be found in the classroom discourse especially in English Foreign Language classroom. In this research, the writer investigates the EFL classroom discourse in both discourse and conversation analysis perspective.

## **METHODS**

The subjects of this study are two English teachers and their students from different schools. The first teacher teaches in SMKN 10 Padang (grade XI TKN) and the second teacher teaches in SMA Adabiah Padang (Grade XII IPA 2).

The data is collected from classroom recording. The recordings were taken in one meeting for each teacher. The two classrooms were respectively observed and audio-taped by the researcher who sat at the back or side of the class throughout the data collection period. Then the audio-taped lessons are transcribed and checked over and over again so that it might not include



misspelled words or any explanations which do not make sense. Even so, some parts of the recordings failed to be transcribed because some are too fast and some are inaudible. Transcription symbols being used in the present study are necessarily selective and indeed are particularly concerned with capturing the key features of talk, namely, sound stretches, silence, cut-offs, emphasis, and the like. After the transcription, the data then analyzed based on the categories such as IRF structures, turn-taking, conversation repair and the repetition

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### 1.1. Classroom Discourse Structure

Based on the transcription of EFL classrooms recording, the discourse structures that can be found are both IRF (Initiation, Response and Feedback) and the variation of IRF structures. The following are the result of IRF structures and IRF variation.

#### 1.1.1. IRF Structure

##### a. The first teacher (1)

*Example 1a:*

T : =Taking message (0,2) *misalnya kita menyuruh orang meninggalkan pesan* (0.2) what is the example?= **(Initiation)**

S : *Anda ingin bicara dengan siapa?* Would you like to leave message? **(Response)**

T : *XX Bagus..* **(Feedback)** What else? *Apa lagi?*

##### b. The second teacher (2)

*Example 2a:*

T : = xx Complication, what is complication?= **(Initiation)**

S : Problem that happen in the story **(Response)**

T : Ok. Good **(Feedback)**

*Example 2b:*



- T : Perfect, *kalau ini saya ganti dengan ini gimana?* (**Initiation**)  
S1 : Present  
S2 : Present perfect (**Response**)  
T : = *jadi xx has untuk present, xx had untuk past*=  
T : Good, you are a good student XX (**Feedback**)

In example 1a it is clear that the teacher use the form of IRF. The teacher ask (initiate) the student to answer the question that she give and directly give the feedback to the students. The same condition also happens in the example 2a and 2b. The teacher in example 2 initiates the conversation by asking the question to the students, and after the students give the response she give the feedback.

From the example below, it can be conclude that, the rigid structure of IRF in the recording is rarely found the EFL classroom. Both of the teachers just use at least one structure of the IRF in their classroom.

### 1.1.2. Variation of IRF Structures

Based on the recording of classroom discourse, the teachers rarely use the rigid form of IRF structure. The teachers usually use the variation of IRF structures during the teaching and learning process. The following are the explanation together with the examples of IRF structure variation found in the EFL classroom discourse.

#### 1.2.1 The IRFR Structure

##### a. The first teacher

*Example 1b:*

- T : = How far is your school from your house? Now I ask you, Ivan how far is your school from your house, Ivan? *Berapa jauh rumah dari sekolahnya?* = (**Initiation**)  
S : *50..kira-kira 50 meter dari rumah buk..*(**Response**)  
T : 50 meters ya (**Feedback**) (0.2)



S : *Iya buk.* (**Response**)

#### **b. The second teacher**

*Example 2c:*

T : Eko is a wise boy..Eko XX (0.2) please tell me about explanation text (**Initiation**)

S : Text that explain about (**Response**)

T : Louder xx please. (**Feedback**)

S : Text that explain about how something work (**Response**)

*Example 2d:*

T : Ya (0.2) Ok. (0.2) aa.. what is the communicative purpose of the narrative text? (**Initiation**)

S : To tell about the story (**Response**)

T : Louder xx please (**Feedback**)

S : To tell the reader about the story (**Response**)

Based on the transcript of the classroom recording, it can be analyzed that during the teaching and learning process, the teacher does not usually use the rigid IRF structure; most of them use the variation of IRFR (Initiation-Response-Feedback-Response). The second teacher uses this structure in order to make the students tell the response loudly and the rest of the students can hear his/ her response well.

### **1.2.2. The IR [IIR1 ... (InRn)] F Structures**

#### **a. The first teacher**

*Example 1c:*

T : = I will tell you about your xx semester mark. Ok. *Kemarin*, Yesterday only xx Dede came to the class. How about the others, *yang lain kemana? Kenapa tidak datang.* Why you didn't come yesterday?=  
(**Initiation**)



- S : (0.2) Still in Lebaran day (**Response**)  
T : Still in Lebaran Day? (**Initiation**)  
s : Yes (Response)  
T : Yes? Where is your hometown, Ari. *Kampungnya dimana?*  
(**Initiation**)  
S : Pariaman *buk* (**Response**)  
T : Pariaman? (0.2) OK (**Feedback**)

**b. The second teacher**

*Example 2e:*

- T : =Do you have homework?=**(Initiation)**  
S : No:: (**Response**)  
T : Are you sure xx? (**Initiation**)  
S : Ye::s (**Response**)  
T : Pasti ada PR nya, ga mungkin ga (**Feedback**)

*Example 2f*

- T : = hmm, did you prepare to take the ELA? = (**Initiation**)  
S : Yes (**Response**)  
T : Yes? (**Initiation**) (0.2) Did you understand what kind of text..  
S : Yes (**Response**)  
T : Which is in the test? (**Initiation**)  
S : Kisi-kisinya belum lagi Miss(**Response**)  
T : (0.2) Bukannya sudah kisi-kisi tu?(**Initiation**)  
S : Belu::m Miss (**Response**)  
S : Hm:: (**Feedback**)

In the examples above, both of the teachers use the structures of IR [IIR1 ... (InRn)] F in the beginning of the class, before coming to the materials. In the example, both of the teachers seem using this kind of structures in order to build



the students' knowledge about the materials or maintaining good classroom environment.

Summing up, based on the analysis of classroom discourse in both EFL classrooms, it can be found that the IRF structure is rarely found in the classroom discourse. The most frequent use is the variation of IRF structures such as IRFR and R [I1R1 ... (InRn)] F.

## **1.2. Classroom Interactional Skills**

### **1.2.1. Turn Taking**

The turn taking allocation in the classroom can be divided into three types; nomination, invitation to bid and invitation to reply. The following are the examples of turn-taking allocation in the EFL classrooms followed by the discussion.

#### **1.2.1.1. Nomination**

##### **a. The first teacher**

*Example 1d:*

T : = How far is your school from your house? Now I ask you, Ivan how far is your school from your house, →Ivan? *Berapa jauh rumah dari sekolahnya?* =

S : 50..kira-kira 50 meter dari rumah buk..

T : 50 meters ya (0.2)

S : *Iya buk.*

*Example 1e:*

T : = Now we go on to (0.2) →Dede Chandra, number 7 xx. Before answer you read the sentence

S : Good morning Global Company here, may I help you?

T : Ada juga yang menjawab who are you. ok..ini question dalam percakapan dimana ini?



## **b. The second teacher**

*Example 2g:*

- T := →Ok Nissa, what do you know about narrative?=  
S : (( ))  
T : Narrative is?  
S : The story that talks about  
T : XX Apa? The story that tells about?  
S : Legend  
T : Legend (0.2) ok, for example..?

*Example 2h:*

- T : → Ok Zelvi..What is the (0.2) Text organization of narrative text?  
S : (0.2) I don't know miss  
T : You don't know (0.2) Ok  
T : → Kevin (0.2) what is the text organization of narrative text?  
S : =Orientation, complication, resolution, reorientation=

Based on the examples above, Nomination is the main turn-allocation skill that found in EFL classroom. There is no allocation for invitation to bid and invitation to reply. And the next turn is usually allocated by the teacher's selecting a student, and then the selected student has the right and is obliged to take next turn to speak. Nomination is mostly found in the first classroom where the teacher reviews the semester test sheets. The teacher asks the students to answer the questions based on their turn. Meanwhile, the second teacher (example 2g and 2h) nominates the student promptly and randomly to answer her questions.

### **1.2.2. Conversation Repair**

#### **1.2.2.1.Self-Repair**

##### **a. The first teacher**

*Example 1f:*

- T : → Her teacher say,  
→I'm sorry, her teacher said?





→ (0.2) said?

S : Susan

T : To Susan not (0.2) not apa? to?

S : To cheat

#### **b. The second teacher**

*Example 2g:*

T : Telling experience which happen in, in the past. Ok (0.2) Jody, what is the communicative purpose of recount text?

S : To:: tell

T : Louder please

S : To tell the experience to someone.

T : XX *Yang keras, ulang lagi..*

S : →To text uhm::

→to tell about the experience

→to::the people or someone

T : *Ok, jadi*, the communicative purpose of recount text is (0.2) to tell.. the::the experience, to? (0.2) to someone

In the example 1f, the teacher realizes mispronounce of the word and repair to the correct one. Meanwhile, in the example 2g the student also do the repair through the repetition, in this repair the student seems not sure about what he wants to say.

#### **1.2.2.2.Other-repair**

##### **a. The first teacher**

*Example 1g:*

T : =Talking on the phone. Ok number 8 please Yovan?=  
S : Color (*wrong pronunciation*)

T : Ca::ller. Ok go on

S : →=Caller: Can you ask Mr. Smith to call me back this afternoon?

Leaving message=



### **b. The second teacher**

*Example 2h:*

T : *Dah liat kamusnya cepat (0.2) apa itu particular day*

S : *[[Hari bersejarah*

S : *Istimewa]]*

T : *→Hari-hari tertentu, ok (0.2) dah..jadi:: kejadian penting atau situasi yang terjadi pada hari-hari tertentu..*

The other-repair in conversation analysis in the recording shows that the teacher helps the learners to repair the pronunciation (example 1g) and also the learners' vocabulary (example 2h).

In short, the repair in conversation also found during the EFL classroom teaching and learning process. The conversation was repaired in the classroom relate to the repair of pronunciation and also vocabulary.

### **1.2.3. Repetition**

The repetition also occurs in the EFL classroom. The following is the examples of repetition in the classroom and the discussion.

#### **a. The first teacher**

*Example 1h:*

15. T : *Nah sekarang we will discuss start from number 1. Please match the question with the correct question word. Tolong dicocokkan pertanyaan dengan kata tanya berikut ini. Nomor 1 start from Jerry (0.2) Jerry number 1 please..*

S : *Where do you go shopping?*

T : *→Where do you go shopping..jadi::kalau seandainya ada yang buat When do you go shopping juga boleh sebenarnya tapi::I have put five answers..ibuk sudah tulis lima jawaban untuk lima soal jadi kita*



*cari mana yang cocok. makanya jawabannya itu ya..Ok number 2 please Ivan.*

S : How far is your school from your house?

T : →How far is your school from your house? Now I ask you, Ivan how far is your school from your house, Ivan? *Berapa jauh rumah dari sekolahnya?*

S : 50::kira-kira 50 meter dari rumah buk..

*Example 2i:*

T : Ok everyday, is it right?

S : Yes

T : Why?

S : The subject

T : The subject i::s? singular

T : If I change the subject

S : They cook

S : They cooks

S : Cookes

T : Cookes?

S : Cook *aja*

T : →Cook *saja*, karena subjek nya plural ata::u?

S : *Jamak*

T : →*Jamak*, jadi tidak kita ubah..*dah* (0.2) do you understand?

*Example 2j:*

T : Fadli::

T : Ok, what is the tense is?

S : Present continuous

T : →Present Continuous

T : How do you know?

S : Verb-ing

*Example 2k:*



T : Ok..hmm. Jody.. ..What is..hmm..What is recount..what is recount text?

S : (( ))

T : →Do you know recount text?

S : (( ))

T : →Recount text..? No..?

S : (( ))

T : →*Apa itu recount?* Ulfa?

S : (( ))

T : →*Apa itu recount* Ulfa?

S : (( ))

T : *Tolong bantu si Jody..*

S : (( ))

T : *Ulfa..?*

S : (( ))

T : xx Come on. XX louder please (0.2) *yang lain diam ya. tolong berfikir kira-kira apa itu,,xx recount*

S : *Bahasa Indonesianya nyo Buk*

T : *Bahasa Indonesia? coba bahasa Indonesianya apa?*

S : *Sebuah teks yang menceritakan kejadian masa lalu yang bersifat nyata..*

T : *Menceritakan kejadian masa lalu yang bersifat nyata. Ok, apa contohnya?*

S : *pengalaman Miss (0.2) pengalaman pergi liburan.*

Based on the examples above, the repetition is used to restate the previous statement, for example in the example 1h, 2i and 2j. Moreover, the repetition also used by the teacher in example 2k to invite students' answer.



## CONCLUSION

The overall aim of this research is to analyze the classroom interaction by observing the naturally-occurring EFL classroom discourse. Based on the explanation above, there are some points that can be concluded

First, the discourse structure in EFL classroom is more complex than single IRF model which also includes the IRFR structure, the IR [I1R1 ... (InRn)] F structure and the IR1F1R2F2 ... RnFn structure. Second, students in EFL classroom rarely initiate the conversation, and usually take the turn by nomination. Third, it is found that repairs are frequently adopted by the teacher and students to cope with problems in speaking, hearing and understanding. Fourth, repetition frequently occurs in EFL classroom, and teachers usually use repetition to emphasize or guide students to complete utterance, and students usually repeat part or all teachers' utterance to show their confirmation or doubts.

Based on the findings, it was found that most of the interaction in the EFL classroom is from the teacher to the students, there is little student initiative and little student-student interaction. Influencing by the traditional learning style and habits, the students in EFL classroom is passive in learning, thus it will be a huge challenge for the teacher to encourage the students to participate in the classroom interaction.

In view of rare student initiation and poor student participation, the teacher needs to create the classroom interactional environment which can facilitate students' performance in classroom interaction, such as topic selecting and grouping. The students should improve their ability to engage in turn-taking, because it is an important aspect of conversation techniques, enabling one to start and remain involved in a conversation. Learning how to manage turn-taking is the very basis for learning how to communicate in the target language.

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