



The Role of Teacher Talk in Enhancing Communicative Competence in EFL Classrooms in Indonesia

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Abstract: This research investigates the role of teacher talk in enhancing students' communicative competence within classroom practices at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Unismuh Makassar. Using a qualitative research design, the study was carried out at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Unismuh Makassar. Data collection involved audio recordings of teacher-student interactions during classroom observations, supported by interviews and document analysis. By employing this triangulated approach, the study ensured the reliability of its findings by corroborating data from multiple sources. The focus was on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, offering valuable insights into how teacher talk contributes to fostering an interactive and supportive learning atmosphere. The findings indicate that teacher talk plays a crucial role in guiding and motivating students while facilitating active participation in classroom activities. Teachers employed a range of strategies, including acknowledging students' emotions, providing praise, integrating students' ideas, delivering information, correcting errors, asking questions, giving instructions, and encouraging engagement. Teacher talk was categorized into two key functions: instructional and managerial. Instructional talk primarily involved explaining and clarifying learning materials, while managerial talk aimed to maintain classroom order and promote student involvement in activities. The study concludes that well-organized teacher talk significantly supports the development of students' communicative competence. By strategically structuring classroom discourse, teachers help students effectively interact with both learning materials and classroom activities, creating an environment conducive to language acquisition. These findings highlight the importance of reflective practices among EFL teachers to refine their communication strategies and enhance learning outcomes.

Keywords: teacher talk, communicative competence, EFL classroom, qualitative research, instructional strategies, classroom management, language acquisition.

▪ INTRODUCTION

A classroom is one in which social actors connect to impart and receive knowledge. To be effectively transmitted, classroom procedures must be inclusive so that each student feels valued and encouraged throughout the learning process. Included in classroom practices is classroom management, which consists of the processes, techniques, and instructional methods employed by teachers to establish an attempt to learn the classroom environment. Also included in classroom practices are students' interactions with their peers and the teacher. In order for the student to feel prepared to study and have the same opportunities as other students, he or she must be taught under optimal conditions in the classroom. Thus, students' learning outcomes are reliant not only on the pedagogy employed by the teacher but also on the learning environment inside the school. In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, the interaction between teachers and students stands as a crucial element of the teaching and learning endeavor. Anita, Yusuf, and Gani (2016) believed that the quality of a teacher's relationship with learners contributes to his or her teaching success. Interaction, according to (Brown 2007), is a

mutually beneficial exchange of thoughts, emotions, and ideas between teachers and students. The teacher, a student, a group, and the class interact to practice the target language in the classroom. The teacher-class context effect demonstrates that the teacher significantly influences the quality of education but that the correlation between teacher and student performance is complex. (UNESCO, 2009). Several investigations have indicated that English classroom dynamics in Indonesia are predominantly led and directed by teachers (Milal, 2011). (Maulana, Opdenakker, Street, and Bosker, 2012) similarly discovered minimal interaction between Indonesian teachers and students in their research. They observed that teachers in Indonesia often dedicate most of their class time to lecturing without engaging with students' learning progress, mistakes, or misunderstandings (Suryati, 2015).

The manner in which a teacher communicates directly influences student engagement, as it constitutes their primary verbal interaction. Various perspectives exist regarding teacher communication, with one approach focusing on the adjustments teachers make during instruction. These adaptations may involve altering word choice or pronunciation to aid student comprehension, particularly in foreign or second language settings. Teachers must be mindful of their language when delivering content or providing instructions to ensure clarity for all students. Simplifying vocabulary and sentence structures is one method of facilitating understanding, as noted by (Al-Ghamdi and Al-Bargi 2017).

(Mu'in et al., 2018) emphasize the importance of teacher communication in foreign language instruction, asserting its significant influence on student achievement. The concept of "teacher talk" has been explored by numerous researchers globally. (Sinclair and Brazil, 1982) provided a definition of "teacher talk" as the language utilized by teachers to provide instructions, clarify activities, and ensure student comprehension. Indonesian scholar Wasi'ah (2016) offered another definition. He said teacher talk can guide learning, build relationships, and provide material. In the 1970s, teachers' speech was studied. Since the start of teaching English, Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have come up with ways for students to interact with each other, which has become a big deal in Indonesia. According to (Yanita et al., 2016), who emphasized the significance of interaction, establishing effective interactions between teachers and students in the classroom is among the paramount factors in teaching and learning.

(Rustandi and Mubarak, 2017) mentioned that interaction facilitates language acquisition for teachers to instruct their students. Moreover, it enhances students' language skills by allowing them to provide feedback to teachers or peers. Interaction in EFL classrooms appears to be perceived as a significant method for establishing a connection between teachers, who serve as knowledge providers, and students, who receive and process that knowledge. (Nasir et al., 2019) further emphasized that effective classroom interaction should provide students with more chances to improve their proficiency in the target language. In this context, teacher communication is viewed as a vital tool for fostering interaction. However, numerous challenges hinder interpersonal interaction within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. (Sofyan and Mahmud, 2014) note that many English teachers, particularly in Indonesia, struggle to recall their teaching content and other significant aspects of classroom activities when asked to reflect on their performance. Various researchers, particularly within Indonesia, have conducted extensive studies on teacher communication within EFL classroom interactions.

The studies are grounded in real-time observations. The initial investigation was conducted by (Nisa, 2014), who employed Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT) by Moskowitz to examine communication patterns in EFL-speaking university classrooms (1971). The findings indicated that the most prevalent form of teacher talk was "giving information," suggesting that teachers primarily directed their speech towards the entire class. So, the teacher was told to utilize the "praising and encouraging" category more frequently to boost the students' confidence and help them improve their English communication skills. Based on the principles of optimal classroom interaction, which involve a balanced blend of teacher-led discourse and addressing challenges stemming from limited student engagement during class activities, this study examined the types of teacher communication in an English class at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Unismuh Makassar. Our initial observation revealed a lack of classroom dynamism, with students seemingly deprived of opportunities to enhance their English communication abilities. Hence, further investigation into this matter is warranted. Teacher-student Interaction further so that solutions to problems arising from the condition can be pursued effectively later. Thus, the researcher intends to carry out research entitled: Exploring Teacher Talk in EFL Classroom.

▪ **METHOD**

Participants

This study involved an English teacher and third-grade students from SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Unismuh Makassar, a prominent private Muhammadiyah school in Makassar, South Sulawesi. The school was selected for its strong academic reputation and diverse student population, making it an ideal setting to study EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. The teacher chosen for the research was an experienced educator, well-versed in applying communicative teaching strategies. The students, as active participants in English lessons, provided a valuable context for examining how teacher talk impacts the development of communicative competence.

Research Design and Procedures

The research employed a qualitative design, focusing on understanding real-world phenomena through participants' perspectives. Qualitative methods, as defined by scholars like Preissle (2006) and Hammersley (2013), aim to explore, describe, and interpret social realities in their natural contexts. This design aligned with the study's aim of deeply analyzing teacher talk and its role in fostering communicative competence among students.

The study was conducted during regular English lessons over a predetermined period, using non-participatory classroom observations. This approach minimized researcher interference, allowing interactions to occur naturally. Observations focused on teacher talk, student responses, and the general classroom environment. All participants provided informed consent before the research began, and their privacy and anonymity were guaranteed.

Instruments

Classroom observation served as the primary data collection instrument, enabling the researcher to document genuine interactions between the teacher and students. Audio recordings of these interactions were made to ensure accuracy and detail in analyzing the classroom discourse. The recordings were transcribed verbatim for thematic analysis.

Semi-structured interviews with the teacher provided additional insights into their strategies, intentions, and perceptions regarding teacher talk. These interviews supplemented the observational data by adding depth and context to the recorded interactions.

Document analysis was also employed to examine lesson plans, teaching materials, and other instructional documents. These sources helped highlight the teacher's planning processes and their alignment with classroom practices aimed at fostering communicative competence.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted in several stages to ensure a thorough understanding of the phenomena under study. First, the audio recordings were transcribed and thematically coded, focusing on patterns in teacher talk, such as types of speech acts, communicative strategies, and their purposes. The data were organized into two main categories: instructional talk (focused on content delivery and skills development) and managerial talk (centered on classroom management and student engagement).

Interview data were analyzed thematically to reveal the teacher's perspectives on their use of language in the classroom. These insights were then triangulated with observational data to strengthen the validity and reliability of the findings. Document analysis further supported the interpretations by linking observed classroom practices to instructional goals.

Triangulation was a key strategy used to ensure the credibility of the results. By combining data from multiple sources observations, interviews, and document reviews the study minimized bias and offered a richer, more comprehensive view of teacher talk in the EFL classroom.

Overall, this methodological approach provided a rigorous framework for examining the dynamic role of teacher talk in developing students' communicative competence. By integrating diverse data sources and analytical techniques, the study offered a well-rounded understanding of how teacher language contributes to effective language learning outcomes.

▪ RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Types of Teacher Talk Occurred during The EFL Learning Process

Indirect Teacher Talk

This category delves into the role of teacher communication, which plays a secondary role in shaping students' communicative abilities. It is employed to motivate students to engage actively and participate in the lesson.

Accepts Feeling

The teacher usually used this category of teacher talk function at the beginning of the lesson. Before students began the lesson, that was a common way for the teacher to greet the students when they came into the class.

T: Assalamu alaikum, Wr. Wb. Good morning.

T : How's life today?

T: Good afternoon?

Praising or Encouraging

Praising involves encouraging or instilling confidence in someone. Teachers commonly employ this method to convey appreciation for their students' contributions or actions. The provided excerpt from the transcript of audio-visual data illustrates various statements made by the teacher for this purpose. It can be shown below:

T: Ok, Good. Applause for your friends.

T : Perfect.

T : Ok good. Applause group six.

Using an Idea of Students

The teacher asks the students to repeat their answers or what they have said to clarify the student's answers. This point contains the teacher's utterances to ask students to speak clearly.

T: ALRIGHT. Siti and Jane. So, I need you to read by yourself first.

T: yes of course dalam sebuah text ada kutipan or ada kata "said, says". Untuk memahami lebih lanjut terkait dengan direct speech you can see in the book.

Asking Questions

Interaction can be prompted more efficiently and effectively by posing questions to students that have predetermined answers. The researcher identified certain questions posed by the teacher from the transcript of classroom observation data, as demonstrated in the subsequent excerpt.

T: Really? It's hot. You said it's hot. What is happen?

T: Do you still remember our activity in the last meeting?

Direct Teacher Talk

This category emphasizes the role of teacher talk, which directly impacts student performance. These functions are also employed to stimulate active participation from students during the lesson.

Giving Information/Lecturing

The teacher provided instructional content to guide students through the lesson. Essentially, by delivering lectures, the teacher imparted new information and vocabulary to the students.

T: Opinion is the way you feel or think about something. Our opinion about something or someone is based on our perspective....

T: Ok, Caption is a text that appears below an image. Most captions draw attention to something in the idea that is not obvious, such as its relevance to the text.

Giving Direction

The function of teacher talk in this category focuses on how the teacher directs the students to do a specific task.

T : Husstt.. Silent please!

T: Now we move to Reflection about caption.

Criticizing or Justifying

The teacher's feedback on the student's performance can boost their motivation to engage in the lesson. It nurtures a conducive atmosphere for language education, aiding in the swift absorption of the target language input. Educators possess the flexibility to offer positive or negative feedback depending on each student's performance.

T: Ok, stop thank you. Advertisement kesalahan dalam pengucapan yah.

T: Farid, please louder your voice. No.. no.. Stop. Your pronunciation is still a lot wrong, especially kata "Exaggerate". Everybody, repeat after me /ɪgˈzædʒəreɪt/.

Communication from the teacher holds significance for both the English instructor and the engagement of students in classroom activities. Especially when asking questions, giving information or lectures, or telling someone what to do. Students can learn grammatical skills, like how to make simple or complicated sentences, by getting information or listening to a lecture. Understand English vocabulary, including content and function words, as well as strategic skills like building or developing the ideas given by the teacher, guessing the meaning of new words, trying to translate word for word from the native language, and choosing relevant content and expressing it with the right tone of voice, body language, and gestures.

The Most and the Least Types of Teacher Talk Uttered by the Teachers

Receiving guidance and directives from teachers or classmates during class and repeatedly attempting to communicate in English aids in language acquisition. Additionally, receiving appropriate feedback can cultivate a supportive and motivating classroom atmosphere for students. Furthermore, teachers should strive to discern which language approach would be most effective in fostering a confident environment, encouraging students' participation in interactive English activities.

Table 1. Result of teacher's interview

Category	Functions	Questions	Result of Interview
Indirect Influence	Accepting	What your reason of greeting your Students?	<i>"I believe that by greeting the students they will feel more welcome in my class and this greeting also become a sign that the learning will begin as they will respond and start to focus their attention on the next thing I said after the greeting".</i>
	Praising/ Encouraging	What do you say or appreciate to your students when they can answer your question correctly?	<i>"When my students are able to answer my question correctly, I would encourage them by saying "good job!" "Excellent!" or simply stating that it is correct, and also elaborating the answer further for them".</i>
	Accepting or using an idea	In what way do you accept your students' idea during the discussion?	<i>"I accept the students' ideas by using such expressions as a sign that I understand their point and it is acceptable. For instance, "I understand" "That</i>

			<i>is a good point” “I see” etc.</i>
Direct Influence	Asking questions	How do you encourage students to inquire during the learning process?	<i>“By keep encouraging them that if they have any questions they should not mind just asking directly and I also will answer it without criticizing the questions being asked.”</i>
	Giving Information	What kind of information that you usually give to your students?	<i>“The information could be other sources that is relevant to their material and the access to the sources or sometimes the added perspective or opinion other than theirs.”</i>
	Giving Direction	When giving directions to your students, do you typically start with English and then switch to Indonesian?	<i>“Because the expression being translated directly can make them learn new expression through the authentic use in the classroom, I hope they also can use it as well.”</i>
	Criticizing	Do you have intentions when you criticize your students? any reason for that?	<i>“The critics are intended to avoid the same error or mistakes in the future also as an example for them to critical when it comes to learning with the intention for development or improvement rather than to be a judgement.”</i>

Teacher talk refers to the verbal communication employed by educators to instruct and facilitate their students' learning. When conducting a second language in the classroom, the teacher talks in a certain way. How teachers talk in a language classroom differs from how they talk in other classrooms. In a language class, the teacher controls how they speak to get the students to participate in the conversation. Because of this, In the classroom, the teacher is the one who starts conversations. Teacher talk is used for many things. When the teacher used it, each function did something different. Its goal is to help students learn and improve their foreign language skills. For example, a teacher might ask a question to control what is going on in the classroom or to see if the students understand.

English Teacher Applies Indirect Teacher Talk in the Classroom

The presence of a teacher is essential in the learning journey to achieve the objective of language acquisition, as highlighted by (Aisyah, 2016). Particularly in the realm of learning foreign languages like English, the teacher serves as both the focal point and facilitator within the classroom environment, as noted by (Incecay, 2010). Teachers help students learn. Language teachers provide most of the target language. The teacher gives enough correct input in the language of target. So that the students can get the correct teacher's information. The teacher-talk function indirectly affects how the students behave during the lesson. But getting the students involved in teaching and learning the

language is important. Both the teacher and the students should take part in a language class. The teacher gives more input in the target language, giving the students more chances to use and practice what they have learned. In this category of teacher talk, one purpose is for the teacher to praise a student's answer or response by saying, "Good job." It tells the students that what they have said or done is important. So, they will feel more comfortable answering the teacher's questions or coming up with ideas that help them become better communicators.

Addressing emotions was the least frequent type of teacher communication observed in the classroom. This form of communication aimed to assist students in understanding their emotions and attitudes by reassuring them that they would not face repercussions for expressing their feelings (Lasantu, 2012). When students perceive that they are being respected, they tend to find the teaching and learning process more enjoyable, thus fostering a positive environment. This occurs when the teacher acknowledges the student's idea with phrases such as "I understand your point." As part of the evaluation process, the student's argument needs to be restated using the student's own words, and the student's ideas need to be constructed or formed through a class debate as deserving of attention (French & Galloway, 1968).

Teachers' words of praise and encouragement carried the value judgment of approval (Lasantu, 2012). Intervention Praise is most effective at changing student behavior because it shows that the teacher approves and tells the student how the academic performance or behavior in question fits with what the teacher expects. When a teacher praises and encourages students, it's like giving them feedback after sharing their thoughts or ideas. During class interaction, the teacher often praises and encourages the students. By praising and encouraging the student, the teacher wants to show respect for those who are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Any sentence that looks or acts like a question is a question. In the classroom, teacher questions are signals or prompts that tell students what they need to learn and how to learn. Arslan (2006) says the most important thing about asking questions is getting people thinking in the classroom. The second most common way for the teacher to talk in class was to ask questions. Asking questions can get students to think critically. If you ask them what they have in mind, they can explain it more.

In the end, accepting how the students feel means that the teacher can guess how they feel based on how they respond. The student's answers told the teacher how they felt at the start of the lesson, whether they were happy or sad. When a teacher praises a student's actions or behavior, this is called praise or encouragement. When a teacher praises or encourages them, the students feel good. When a student makes a suggestion or comes up with an idea, and the teacher repeats the idea in his or her own words, the teacher accepts or uses the student's idea. By giving their thoughts, students become more involved in the learning process. Students think their teacher gave them the courage to speak up in class because the teacher used their ideas to help them learn. To check student comprehension, a teacher may offer questions. All of the things listed above do happen when people learn. The teacher needed these things to make the students feel more at ease and get them involved in the learning process.

English Teacher Applies Direct Teacher Talk in the Classroom

The teacher runs the class and is also the primary source of the target language. She ensures that each lesson's lessons, tasks, and goals are done. How students do things directly affects their actions when the teacher talks about a study. During the class, the

teacher tells the kids how to perform better. By doing this, the teacher will talk more, take charge of the classroom, and try to get the students to behave well during the lesson. The teacher just gave a speech without asking if the students understood. The teacher took the initiative to do that. Then, giving directions is when a teacher tells a class to exercise or do some other activity as part of teaching and learning. That was something the teacher did to help the learning go well. All of the things listed above do happen when people learn. A lecture is a way to teach in which the teacher tells the students about facts or ideas in person. Most of the time, it's up to the class to take notes, which means that there may not be much or any participation in class, such as questions or discussions. When a teacher gives a good lecture, students are more likely to pay attention. Students get to use their English language skills when they give directions. Teachers should also try to give clear, short instructions in the classroom so that everything goes smoothly. So, a successful direction will lead to an excellent place to teach and learn (2014).

In the meantime, teachers should be able to show their displeasure, disappointment, and frustration to their students (Sofyan, 2014). So, the teacher has to be clear about what the students can and cannot do in the classroom. Critics shouldn't say bad things about the students or put them down because that would hurt them (Gharbavi & Irvani, 2014). Explain the material, give some directions, or ask some questions. When the teacher asked everyone in the class, everyone answered. Next, when the teacher explained something and asked a question to see if the student understood, or when a student asked a question, gave an opinion, or shared an idea with the teacher. Each student responded to the teacher's inquiry, and they are able to engage in conversation with both the teacher and their classmates.

The Use of Teacher Talks for English Teacher Enhance Students' Communicative Competence

Teacher talk is significant for teaching a language (Cook, 2000). The pedagogical theory says that the language teachers use in the classroom significantly impacts how well a class does. According to many researchers, teachers talk about 70% of the time in the classroom (Cook, 2000; Chaudron, 1988). Through teacher talk, teachers teach students new information and skills, plan learning activities, and help students practice. In English classrooms, the teacher's language is not only the subject of the class but also how the goal of teaching is reached. The arrangement of the classroom and the attainment of lesson objectives are impacted by the communication style of the teacher. Teachers' words impact both the manner and frequency of student language use. Effective teacher talk assists students in locating correct answers, while the quantity of teacher input encourages increased student participation. The greater the number of questions posed by the teacher, the more likely students are to respond.

Asking questions is an important part of how teachers talk to students, and that helps them improve their ability to communicate. By asking strategic questions, a teacher can figure out what students know, what they don't know, and where there are gaps or misunderstandings. Questions also teach, which is another important thing they do. The teaching function is about how the questions help students learn and organize new and old information. Questions give you the practice and feedback you need to grow. Questions help students pay attention to what is being taught. Questions can also help you learn how to combine different types of knowledge. In order to reach this goal, the student can use questions to review what he or she has already learned to build a solid understanding of the new topic. Also, as new information is added, questions can be used

to explain how it relates to what is already known. The third thing that classroom questions do is get students excited about learning. Teachers can get students involved in the lesson by asking them questions that push their thinking and give them problems. From the point of view of the lesson, a question at the beginning can grab students' attention and give the lesson a focus.

Also, asking questions often and at different times can get students involved and give them chances to do so throughout the lesson. Research in this area shows that students are most likely to stay on task when a teacher asks questions. Lastly, questions can be used individually to bring students back to the lesson or give them a chance for one student to stand out. How teacher talk helps students improve their English language skills. In Classroom Interaction, teacher talk has many benefits. Among them are:

The students are happy to be in class so that they can do well in school. Teachers Talk can make it easier for teachers and students to work together in the classroom. Knowledge. Then, when students learn, they will know how to talk. So, they can make it better. The questions (teacher talk) will interest the students and make them want to know more. It will make the students more likely to participate in teaching and learning (Adi, 2013). Most students would agree if the teacher used all kinds of questions in the classroom, like procedural, referential, and display questions, to help them talk about their thoughts, ideas, and opinions. A teacher should be able to balance what he says with what the student says, what is going on, and the situation because this can affect how the student learns to talk. It is generally knowledge that teachers discuss the curriculum, instruction, and evaluation of teaching behavior's content. This means that teachers need to be able to bring together and use all three parts of the conversation (Sukarni & Ulfa, 2015, p. 263). Richard (1990) says that teacher talk has three main parts: (a) the physiological part. This part has to do with how the teacher's voice is made. When the teacher talks in class, he must be able to keep his voice quiet. This part concerns how teachers talk to their students in a way that fits the situation; (c) Pedagogic aspects. This concerns how teachers plan lessons so students can interact well.

▪ CONCLUSION

According to the study, teacher discussion aided in the development of communicative skills in students, including discourse, grammar, sociolinguistics, and strategy. The teacher used initiation to show that she understood how her students felt, to praise or encourage them, to use their ideas, to give information, to correct, to ask questions, and to teach. Organizing teacher talk into instructional talk gives students a chance to respond to what is being taught, and organizing teacher talk into management talk gives students a chance to do classroom activities or exercises in a structured way. The result showed that the students were strongly encouraged to participate in everything that happened in the classroom. They knew that student participation was important and what the students could get out of classroom activities.

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