

INVESTIGATING TEACHER-LEARNER INTERACTION IN EFL CLASSES AT BASIC LEVEL OF LEARNING

Asmaa' Yahya Qassim

Dept. of English Language, College of Basic Education, University of Duhok, Kurdistan Region, Iraq.

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ABSTRACT:

The current research aims at identifying the impact of teacher behavior on teacher-learner interaction in English language at the basic instruction level. The population consists of all male pupils in basic stage instruction within Kurdistan Region-Duhok city-Directorate of education, during the academic year (2013-2014). The sample for the study has been randomly chosen from the basic instruction – level 8. It consists of (32) pupils, sixteen forming the experimental group which has been taught by using Flanders Decimal System of behavior teacher-learner interaction (it has been prepared by the researcher depending on the source and other previous studies and researches so as to test the hypotheses of the current study. It has also been made valid through its presentation to a panel of experts, while the reliability factor has been computed by using the re-test method. On the other hand, sixteen pupils formed the control group which has been taught by using the Recommended Method by the Ministry of Education (henceforth RM). The t-test has been used for the equivalence of groups. Moreover, the researcher has used the tape recorder to access to the patterns of verbal interaction inside the classroom. The achievement test is the research tool for gaining the results of the experiment after being made valid and reliable. The findings show that teachers of English can make use of the given time in the class more successfully if they focus on encouraging learners (pupils) and accepting their ideas. Additionally, there is a limited influence of the variable related to the period of teaching service and place of graduation on the patterns of interaction inside the classroom as it has affected the percentage of the teacher's instant questions. Thus, it showed teacher of English is the most effective strategy in teacher-learner interaction. The research ends with some recommendations and suggestions depending on the findings of the study

KEYWORDS: Interaction, EFL classes, Basic Level, Learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning is considered an organic process that involves the simultaneous acquisition of skills. To bring about latter, teachers are required to use the foreign language in the classroom learning situations that motivate the learners to communicate. Hence, the teacher is the main milestone in the language teaching process as he is responsible for presenting the teaching material, encouraging the learners and monitoring their progress as well as remedial teaching (language).

The other further crucial factor in the learning process is the learner himself. He is very significant in dealing with the material he is learning. In order to realize the meaning in English use, the learner has to employ all the available aids including the teacher's help to improve his/her own learning. What is the most important is training. Training is a highly complex activity in TEFL which is based on three basic interdependent elements, namely the learner, the teacher and the curriculum. The current research focuses on the teacher's main job to convey the goals to the learner i.e., through his interaction with learners during the process of teaching. The teacher should be aware that he needs to make the process of language learning as enjoyable as possible since it will take more time and effort (Wittich: 1979, p. vii). It is generally assumed as self-evident that learning a language is a purposeful goal oriented activity (Widdowson: 1984, p. 242). Therefore, when the teacher wants to develop the learner's skill and confidence in communication, he should always bear in mind that his goal is the development of the learners' ability to interact freely with others (Rivers and Temperly: 1978, p. i). So, the teacher's teaching behavior is very important in controlling the lesson in the classroom. In the same vein, many opportunities encourage learners to share the discussion inside the classroom and practice.

1.1 The Problem to be Investigated:

A great variation is usually noticed among the learners in their attempt to learn an FL. Furthermore, there is clear lacking of verbal and non-verbal communication as well as underachievement outlined from pupils' scores. Thus, a gap exists in the class and it may cause which can be a serious issue in the process of TEFL.

1.2 Research Questions:

The researcher has raised forward the following questions:

1. What are the types of teaching interactions existed in TEFL?
2. What are the practical points that can develop the analysis of the teacher's behavior (interaction)?
3. What are the reasons behind the learners' underachievement in EFL?

1.3 The Hypotheses:

The current research hypothesizes the following:

1. There is no significant statistical difference in the patterns of verbal interaction according to teacher's years in service (short period less than 15 years, long period, more than 15 years).
2. There is no significant statistical difference in the patterns of verbal interaction according to the place of graduation (College of Arts, College of Education).
3. There is no significant statistical difference in the patterns of verbal interaction according to the (gender) of the teacher (male / female).

1.4 Aims of the Study:

1. To probe the most effective strategy used by EFL teachers and the reason behind the weakness in the learning process.
2. To investigate the effectiveness of Flanders Decimal System in teacher-learner interaction.

1.5 Limits of the Study:

This research is limited to:

1. Basic school teachers of English.
2. Pupils in the eighth basic stage in the intermediate schools for males only in Duhok city during the academic year 2013-2014
3. The teaching material is Activity Book (8) of Sunrise Series.

1.6 The Significance of the Study:

The current research can be significant as it sheds light on the real situation of the process of TEFL inside the class. These two aspects cannot be achieved successfully unless relevant or suitable environment is created. By these words, i.e., for gaining better learning and teaching, a different one from the present method in teaching should be followed. Since the learning process aims is to make correction (or modulate) in the behavior of the learners, it needs a constant style and should make use of effective ways to attract the learner's attention and achieve interaction between the teachers and the learners. Moreover, the significance lies in knowing the traces that the teachers leave in the learners' behavior while enhancing the ability to choose the relevant method in modulating that behavior.

1.7 Definition of Basic Terms:

1. Teaching is an assisted performance in which the teacher has an integral role to the student. (Garcia: 2001, p. 232).
 2. Teaching refers to the image of classroom activity where a teacher works with the whole class in a one-to-many. Students can be divided into smaller subgroups, with the teacher moving around to work with each group in turn (Karen and Christine: 2001, p. 5).
 3. Teaching behavior refers to that teacher's behaviors: exhibiting appropriate levels of high need (Marzona and Jana, p. 6-13).
 4. Teaching interaction means description of the form and content behavior or social interaction in the classroom. (A Dictionary of Sociology: 1988, p. 20).
 5. Teaching Interaction refers lessons where students have multiple opportunities to communicate with teacher as essential knowledge. (Encyclopedia: 2016).
- The researcher adopts the last definition above as the operational definition.

1.8 Types of Interactive Techniques:

Interaction needs techniques with beneficial purposes. Furthermore, awareness of the interactional processes helps teachers and learners having comprehensive understanding of language acquisition in a formal context.

There are some of the interactive techniques that can be useful for the teacher and the learner:

1. Picture prompt: The teacher shows the students an image with no explanation. Finally, answers should not be given unless getting the already explored questions.
2. Handing – Distributing: Asking or handwriting.
3. Direct error correction is a common skill in teaching language. A technique which is usually preferred by learners (Seedhouse, 2004: p. 547-83).

Moreover, techniques for classroom interaction depends on the class is the class organized. There are some previous studies that reflect these techniques clearly for instance reflection is done effectively through linking student achievement with social development. It falls into one of three broad categories: emotional support in which teachers help learners by experience appropriate levels of independence. The other level is the classroom organization which is regarded as motivation and points of view. Finally, is the instructional support dealing with students' cognitive development and language growth (Reading Rockets: 2013, p. 25).

1.9 What is Interaction:

The notion of interaction is not easy to be understood by everyone. It is connected strongly with the teacher exactly within the field of teaching and learning EFL or ESL. Hence, it needs an experienced teacher to apply it attentively. This is so, because every day, teachers take several decisions to interact with their students effectively (Reading Rockets: 2014, p. 57). It is mutual or reciprocal action or influence. It is used to indicate that language (for action) used to maintain conversation, teach or interact with participants involved in teaching and learning in the classroom by questioning and making sense of the world (Rhalmi: 2016, p. 3).

Moreover, interaction means the lesson procures. Stating the lesson inside the classroom does not only carry the meaning of presentation of the language material only, but also the teacher's method of interaction with the learners by following various activities to break the routine of the teaching learning process of the language. One of these activities which attracts the learners' shared' attention is the teacher's expectations. While classroom discourse events vary, many researches have indicated that the teacher's talk dominates the classroom (1987, p. 26). The teacher would better talk while the learners share at the same time. Thus, the teacher's questions continue as factors with learners (Johnstone: 2004, p. 53).

1.10 Flanders Decimal System:

Flanders (1970: p. 33-34) has presented it to study the influence of teachers and their interaction with their learners. Thus, he divides the system into ten factions that can be partially divided into three principles:

1. The teacher's verbal behaviour which contains two kinds of influence (direct / indirect).
2. Pupils verbal behaviour.
3. A common behaviour.

Thus, teacher's talk can be analyzed through aim and mode. Teacher's talk is analyzed according to the interaction features of Flander's Decimal System. These can be summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Flander's Decimal System

		Factions	
Teacher's Talk	Indirect Influence	1	Accepting the feelings of the pupils: teacher is aware of the pupils feelings where he confesses that they have the right to express these feelings and he refuses any form of punishment or objection.
		2	Appraisal and encouragement: the praises which eliminate the tension and fear at the pupils.
		3	Accepting and using the pupil' idea: accepting of the pupils' thought by the teacher. When pupil mentions an opinion, the teacher might accept it or use it.
		4	Presenting questions: The questions which the teacher ask his pupils in which their answers are expected to be about the lessons.
	Direct Influence	5	Lecturer: the teacher introduces the knowledge and facts which add to the atmosphere of the classroom something or quietness.
		6	Giving guidance and instructions: the teacher expects liabilities in following these instructions by saying for e.g., "Open your books on page so and so".
		7	Criticism and justification of authority: the phrases used by the teacher to modify pupils wrong into a correct one.
Pupils* Talk		8	Pupils' response: every reply by the pupils based on the order of the teacher.
		9	Pupils' imitation: the sharing of the pupils' talk without having permission.
	Silence or Disorder	10	Silence or disorder: the periods of silence which might require a silent reading or writing by the teacher and the pupils on the blackboard.

(Flanders: 1970, p. 34)

2. RELATED STUDIES:

Starting the lesson inside the classroom does not only mean presentation of the materials with the language skill, but it refers to the way of the teacher's interaction with his learners by the teaching-learning process following various activities to break the routine of the language. One of these activities which attracts the learners' attention is the teacher's talk storming. Many researchers have indicated that the teacher would better talk while learners share at the same time in terms of quality and quantity.

1. Al-Fra (2004) carried out a study entitled "Evaluating the Classroom Verbal Teaching Performance of the Basic Stage Instruction in Palestine University".

The major aim was to present a tool for observing the types of verbal interaction that are practiced by Palestine Educational College Teachers and work in the field of basic instruction by investigating the level of proficiency in educational colleges in gaining verbal interaction inside the classrooms. The sample was limited to the teachers of Palestine College of Education who were working for the Ministry of Education (basic level). Observation was the tool of the study. Finally, the research ended with some suggestions and recommendations stating that the teachers should practice, before and during their service the style of verbal interaction analysis and how it can be used in self-evaluation and evaluating others.

2. Monegale (2008) carried out a study entitled "Explaining teacher-student interaction through more effective classroom questions: from traditional teacher fronted lessons to student-centered lessons in CLIL".

This paper studies oral skill and students' speaking ability to communicate at the Italian EFL classes. Teachers have increased their interaction within the learning environment. In general, the students' oral production had proved to be in low competence of the content processed. It is related to the lack of practice opportunities. The speaking skill was that the lessons observed were usually teacher-led rather than student-centered. Moreover, teachers spoke most of the lesson time when students did not appear to find a reason to intervene. In fact, this is what usually happens in all classrooms for the most of the time. Data collected during the study, refers to the use of questions by the teachers and tries to explore questions that could be used not only as a means to promote learning in CLIL context but also as a means to enhance students' participation and, consequently their oral production.

3. Cohen (2011) investigated "Teacher-student interaction in classrooms of students with specific learning difficulties in learning English as a foreign language". The researcher tries to find the difficulties of learners at the process of their interaction with their teacher inside the classroom. Observation and video tape classroom interactions has been used for carrying the study. Several strategies have been used for teacher learner interaction. As final step of the results, the researcher concluded that positive use of various strategies of interactions lead to effective and successful interaction between teacher and his learners.

4. Snell (2013) investigated "Improving Teacher-Student Interaction in the EFL Classroom: An Action Research". In this study, the researcher shows a great problem for EFL teachers in their dealing with passive students. The sample was students from Tokyo College. The sample need to participate in answering teacher's question by their will not obligation. This is really happening during the lecture. Action research has been used to enhance learners interaction actively. Unfortunately, the results were not as the researcher's expect at the beginning of the experiment. Gradually, a good progress has been noticed from the side of the leaners. A point that has encouraged th researcher to use more strategies and actions for the sake of overcoming the low interaction. In conclusion, the teacher and the learners have become more concerned in their interaction. It was successfully used and raised the level of learners interaction.

3. METHODOLOGY

Due to the importance of the experimental design since it is considered to be the cornerstone for enabling the researcher to test the hypotheses so as to arrive at valid conclusions. Concerning the relationship between variables of this research the pretest-posttest equivalent groups has been used by the researcher (Best: 1980, p. 167).

3.1 Sample

Moreover, the sample has been randomly chosen from among the eighth basic level of the pupils. They have been made equivalent in certain variables, namely males age, intelligence, parents' educational attainment and previous achievement in English.

3.2 Teaching Materials

The teaching material has been represented by Sunrise Activity Book (8). The sample was divided into two equivalent groups, the first for experimental (16 pupils) while the second for the control (16 pupils). The total number of the subjects was (32 pupils).

3.3 Data Analysis and Discussion

Each of the two experienced teachers (their lessons) who were selected to participate in this research was recorded for three subsequent sessions (four hours and 30 minutes for each class). The lesson for each one was different from the other. Finally, the data were analyzed. Moreover, the t-test has been used for the equivalence of groups. Furthermore, tape recorder has been used in order to investigate the patterns of verbal interaction inside the classroom. Achievement is the researcher's tool for gaining the results of the experiment. The achievement test is valid since it has been presented to a panel of experts. The reliability factor has been gained by using the re-test method (Van Dalen: 1979, p. 280).

4. CONCLUSION

The researcher has concluded that teachers of English can make use of the given time in the class more successfully if they focus on encouraging their pupils and their ideas. Furthermore, there is a limited influence of the variable related to the period of the service and place of graduation in determining the patterns of interaction inside the classroom as it has affected the percentage of the teacher's instant questions. However, it is necessary for an EFL teacher to have an effective practice until it becomes part of the teacher's daily plan in the classroom. This research could be used to enhance learning English as a foreign language.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The researcher recommends adopting Flanders Instructional System as an indicator work owing to its advantages in evaluating the teacher and providing him with feedback information obtained by this system and explaining the patterns of interaction inside the classroom. In addition, teachers need to have some knowledge about the best patterns of interaction so that their work would be more effective and will raise their level and knowledge. Furthermore, the teacher use of good strategies in his interaction with learners will enhance the learners high degree of interaction. That point will help teachers be good researchers as well since they discover the reasons behind their learners low interaction in the practical lessons.

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زانینی کاریگه‌ری ره‌فتاری کولیژ له‌کارلیکردن له نیوان قوتابی و ماموستا له مادده‌ی زمانی ئنگلیزی له قوناغی فیرکردن بنه‌ما

پوخته:

کاریگه‌ری ره‌فتاری کولیژ له کاریکردن له نیوان قوتابی مادده‌ی و زمانی ئنگلیزی له قوناغی فیرکردنی بنه‌مایی پوختراو هه‌ولدا ئەمه خویندن بو زانینی کاریگه‌ری ره‌فتاری کولیژ له‌کارلیکردن له نیوان قوتابی و ماموستا له مادده‌ی زمانی ئنگلیزی له قوناغی فیرکردن بنه‌ما ده‌بیت کومه‌لگه‌ی به دوا گوران له قوتابی نیر له قوناغی فیرکردن هه‌روه‌ها ده‌بیت نموونه له (32) داواکرد (شازده) داواکرد نوینه‌رایه‌تی ده‌که‌ن کومه‌له‌یی فه‌لسه‌فه‌یی ئەزمونگه‌ری و ئەوه‌ی که ئەنجامدا وانه ووتنه‌وه‌ی ئەو به به‌کارهێنانی نیزام (فلانرز) بو کارلیکردن کولیژ له‌گه‌ل قوتابی (هه‌روه‌ها ئەنجامدا ئاماده‌کردنی ئەو له‌لایه‌ن توێژه‌ر به پشت به‌ستنی له‌سه‌ر بنه‌چه و خویندن توێژینه‌وه‌ی پێشتره‌وه‌ی بو تاقیکردنه‌وه‌ی ؟ تیز خویندنی ئیستا به‌م شیوه‌یه ئەنجامدا و دوپات کردنه‌وه له به‌لام کومه‌له‌ی ئەوه ده‌بیت له شازده داواکرد ئەنجامدا و وانه ووتنه‌وه به‌ریگه‌ی کومباوی . و به‌کارهێنا توێژه‌ر

(ت - ته‌ست) (لتاکافو) کومه‌له . و جگه له بو ئەوه ئەنجامدا به‌کارهێنانی ئامیری تو مارکه‌ر بو دوپات کردنه‌وه‌ی له (نماج) کارلیکردن زانستی ده‌نگی به‌کاربه‌ر له ناو ریزی خویندن . و به‌کارهێنا توێژه‌ر ده‌ستکه‌وتن له‌پاش ئەنجامدا دوپاتکردنه‌وه له‌راستگویی ئەو و راگیرێ ئەو ، وه‌ک جگه له بوو ئەوه ، دوزییه‌وه هه‌یه کارگه‌ری سنوردار بو گوراوی دانه‌پال بو ماوه‌ی خزمه‌ت له‌وانه ووتنه‌وه و جوری کولیژی ده‌رچوو له‌و ماموستا له‌لایه‌نی دیاریکردن (نمازج) کاریکردن و پرسپاری ماموستا . ئەنجامدا رونکردنه‌وه چون به‌زه‌حمه‌ت ده‌بیت ماموستا زیاتر کاریگه‌ری . و له‌کوتایی دا ئەنجامدا هه‌ندیک راستپارده و پێشنیار به پشت به‌ستیک له‌سه‌ر ئەنجامی خویندن .

په‌یقین سه‌ره‌کی: کارلیکردن، فیرکردنی زمانی ئنگلیزی، قوناغی فیرکردنی بنه‌مایی، فیرکردن.

تقصی التفاعل بين المدرس والطالب في دروس اللغة الانكليزية كلفة اجنبية لمرحلة التعليم الاساس

المخلص:

سعت هذه الدراسة الى تقصي التفاعل بين المدرس والطالب في دروس اللغة الانكليزية كلفة اجنبية في مرحلة التعليم الاساس. يتكون مجتمع البحث من الطلبة الذكور في مرحلة التعليم الاساس في اقليم كردستان - محافظة دهوك - مديرية التربية للعام الدراسي من السنة الدراسية (2014-2013). تم اختيار عينة البحث عشوائيا من طلبة المرحلة الثامنة للتعليم الاساس من الذكور فقط. وقد تكونت العينة من (32) طالب، ستة عشر طالبا يمثلون المجموعة التجريبية والتي تم تدريسها باستخدام نظام فلاندرز لتفاعل التدريسي مع الطالب (وقد تم اعداده من قبل الباحثة بالاعتماد على الاصل والدراسات والبحوث السابقة وذلك لاختبار فرضيات الدراسة الحالية، وكذلك تم التأكد من صدقه عن طريق عرضه على مجموعة من الخبراء. اما جانب الثبات فقد تم الحصول عليه بطريقة (اعادة الاختبار). اما المجموعة الضابطة فقد تكونت من ستة عشر طالبا تم تدريسهم بالطريقة المقررة رسميا. واستخدمت الباحثة (اختبار T) لتكافؤ المجموعتين. وبالإضافة الى ذلك تم استخدام جهاز التسجيل للتأكد من نماذج التفاعل اللفظي المستخدم داخل الصف الدراسي. واستخدمت الباحثة التحصيل بعد ان تم التأكد من صدقه وثباته، كأداة للحصول على نتائج التجربة. وبعد تحليل النتائج تم التوصل الى انه بإمكان مدرسي اللغة الانكليزية ان يستفيدوا من الوقت المتوفر لديهم في الصف بنجاح اكثر فيما لو ركزوا على تشجيع طلبتهم وقبول آرائهم. بالإضافة الى ذلك، وجد هناك تأثير محدود لمتغير الخدمة في التدريس وجهة التخرج على تحديد نماذج التفاعل واسئلة المدرس. اذن، تم توضيح كيف ان يكون المدرس اكثر فاعلية وماهي الاستراتيجية الأكثر تأثيرا . واخيرا تم تقديم بعض التوصيات والمقترحات بالاعتماد على نتائج الدراسة.

الكلمات الدالة: التفاعل، دروس اللغة الانكليزية كلفة اجنبية، مرحلة التعليم الاساس، التعليم.