Teachers' Talk and EFL in University Classrooms

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find the category of Teacher Talk (TT) in EFL (English as Foreign language) class at English Language Study Program at Indonesian Muslim University. Specifically for the Teacher Talk category, this study focuses on how many Teacher Talk categories appear in class for seven times each. This research was conducted in the EFL (English Education Study Program Class) Faculty of Literature at UMI. The participants of this study were 1 (one) English Education lecturer. While students who became participants were fifth semester students from C1 class that consists of 30 students. Data in this study were collected using video and audio recordings. Video and audio recordings are used to collect the Lecturer Teacher Talk category. Video recordings in this study were used to obtain a natural picture of class interaction. The results of this study are 7 categories of Teacher Talk displayed by Lecturers when interacting in class, namely: (1) starting or opening a class; (2) provide an explanation; (3) Give instructions; (4) Asking questions; (5) Encourage and motivate; (6) Provide Reinforcement; and (7) Closing.

Keywords: *Teacher Talk category, EFL, ideal Teacher Talk*

Introduction

Interaction in teaching learning process become highlighted point because it will determine the flow of material delivery and teacher-students engagement during class. The type of language used by teachers to deliver instruction in class is called Teachers' Talk. Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics defines Teacher talk as a variety of languages used by instructors when they are in the teaching process. In trying to communicate with students, teachers often simplify speech, introducing various characteristics of stranger speech and other simple speaking styles aimed at language learners "(Richards, 1992: 471). Each teacher or lecturer has his/her own way in delivering the material that they consider effective in teaching learning process.

The achievement of learning objectives is strongly influenced by classroom interaction. Brown (2006) states that, "interaction is a collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, which produces a mutual effect with each other" (p.165). Rivers (Brown, 2000, p.65) previously stated that through classroom interaction, students can improve their language skills because they are exposed to teacher explanations or original material provided by the teacher, group discussions, and students also have the opportunity to practice the language they have.

This research focuses on identifying the type of Teacher Talk in teaching and learning process.

Method

This research is categorized as a descriptive study using the observation method. *Research Sites and Participants.* This research was conducted in the EFL (English Education Study Program Class) Faculty of Literature at UMI. The participants of this study were 1 (one) English Education lecturer. The lecturer is a lecturer in English Language Education Study Program who has had teaching experience in EFL classes for more than five years. While students who became participants were fifth semester students from C1 class, amounting to 30 students. Data in this study were collected using video and audio recordings. Video recordings are used to collect the Lecturer Teacher Talk category. Video recordings in this study are used to obtain a natural picture of class interaction.

When collecting data, the researcher becomes a passive participant which means that the researcher is not responsible for the teaching and learning process and only observes what is happening in the classroom. In analyzing the data, the researcher first transcribes the utterances that have been recorded through video and after transcribing; the writer arranges the utterances according to the transition time of the teaching and learning process from beginning to end and then analyzes them.

Results

Based on the results of the transcript of the teaching and learning process recording in class for seven meetings, researchers found seven types of Teacher Talk categories that could be analyzed:

Extract 1: Start / Open Class

Lecturer: "Assalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh…helo ketemu lagi dengan saya. Are you happy today? Well, we have discussed about PLP last week. I mean introduction to PLP, so today we will have a brief explanation about culture, school culture" (Video 1)

Analysis: Based on the extract above, the type of Teacher Talk used by lecturers is greeting, inviting prayers, reviewing previous material, introducing new material, and giving direction.

Extract 2: Provide Explanation

Lecturer: "Yang dikelompokkan dengan menggunakan standar pengolahan referensi setelah diolah dan sudah tersusun baru disebarluaskan dan baru dibuka, silahkan keperpustakaan masuk dilihat dan referensi disebut melayani, Ada 3 kata kunci pengertiannya terserah anda memilih redaksi seperti apa tapi ada kata penghimpunan, pengolahan dan penyebaran/ pelayanan, terserah ada mau kasih redaksi seperti apa tapi kata kuncinya ada 3 penyebar luasan/ pelayanan."

Analysis: Based on the extract above, the type of Teacher Talk used by the lecturer is to provide an explanation. The explanation given by the lecturer is accompanied by a concrete example in accordance with the material. In addition, to further clarify the material presented, the lecturer also enriches the explanation by presenting an analogy, namely providing a comparison between two different things but having the same sense.

Extract 3: Give Instruction

Lecturer: "I want you to create this kind of thing yang akan membudaya di sekolah dengan mendesain suatu sistem pengembangan kemampuan Bahasa Inggris di sekolah"

Analysis: Based on the extract above, the type of Teacher Talk displayed by the Lecturer is to give instructions to students after giving an explanation. The instructions given at once as a marker that most of the core material has been delivered and the session of interaction with students began to be opened by the lecturer. In this type of Teacher Talk, the lecturer tries to give instructions / directions clearly by giving repetitions, examples that are delivered systematically.

Extract 4: Asking Questions

Lecturer: what's the different between their school, let's say estate school and pesantren? apa perbedaan budaya yang ada didalam situ?"

Analysis: Based on the extract above, the type of Teacher Talk displayed by the Lecturer is asking questions. The types of questions used by the lecturer in the extract above can be divided into three types. The first is a question that aims at encouraging students to think further related to the material that has been submitted; the second is a question to check the extent of student understanding and the third is a more rhetorical question.

Extract 5: Encouraging and Motivating

Lecturer: "Pertanyaan saya, siapa yang tentukan kemudi kanan atau kiri? Yah begitulah sejatinya leader walaupun tidak kelihatan, tapi sangat berpengaruh. Apa hubungannya dengan Anda yang akan menjadi guru Bahasa Inggris nantinya? Tidak mesti jadi kepala sekolah untuk bisa berpengaruh. Ada quote yang sempat saya baca bahwa orang tidak pintar selalu mau Nampak pintar, sementara orang pintar don't care everything"

Analysis: Based on the extract above, the type of Teacher Talk displayed by the Lecturer is to encourage and motivate students. The motivation conveyed by the lecturer is still related to the material and in the form of real examples and has a 'value' in carrying out life as an educated human being. In addition, to motivate students when giving responses and questions during the teaching and learning process, the lecturer gives a 'reward' in the form of 'good', 'good voice'

Extract 6: Reinforcement

Lecturer: "Yak itu kata kata kuncinya. efisien itu penghematan dana , duit , , money `efektif adalah cara cepat mencapai tujuan. saya ulang apa itu efektif ? efektif, efek pokoknya harus. efisien itu harus ingat efisiensi dana selaluki bilang efisiensi dana apa itu efisiensi dana. apa itu efisiensi dana"

Analysis: In the extract above, the type of Teacher Talk used by the Lecturer is for the purpose of strengthening; reinforcement of material presented in the previous session. Strengthening is addressed by the lecturer by repeating a few words as an affirmation and showing the key point of the discussion.

Extract 7: Closing the Teaching and Learning Process

Lecturer: "all right, kita sampai disini dulu yah. Next time, you have to prepare your group discussion, please prepare it. Thanks any way. Assalamu aalaikum"

Analysis: In the extract above, the Teacher Talk delivered by the Lecturer is a reminder of the activities at the next meeting and closes the meeting by saying thank you and greetings.

Discussion

From the seven Teacher Talk categories presented by the Lecturer, the categories can be divided into three core activities in the teaching and learning process, namely the opening, core and closing phases. This is in line with what was written by Mehan (1979 in Yan, 2006) that the general teaching and learning process consists of three components, (1) the opening phase, where teachers and students inform each other that they, will be involved in various learning activities, (2) the core phase, where the teacher and student information exchange information, and (3) the closing phase, where participants are reminded of the core of the lesson. In the core phase, the teacher usually does three things (Sinclair & Brazil, 1982 in Yan, 2006): telling students something, making students do and say something, evaluating the things students do and say. This means that the teaching and learning phase which consists of opening a class, core activities and closing the class also applies to the EFL class.

Of the seven Teacher Talk categories presented by the Lecturer, six of them are monologues and only one category is in the form of dialogue, namely in category 4 (asking questions). However, the results of the transcript show that precisely the categories and sessions giving this question are longer in duration than the other Teacher Talk categories and dominate the teaching and learning process. This is shown by the lecturer by controlling class discussion with the participation of students. Lecturers always make interactive classes by trying to get students involved in class discussions by asking them lots using open questions accompanied by understanding questions. This is in line with the theory of Celcia-Murcia (1989 in Nurpahmi, 2008) which distinguishes Teacher Talk into two types, namely: Teacher Talk indirectly and directly. Teacher Talk does not directly cover four things in the teaching and learning process, namely (1) accepting students' feelings, (2) stimulating students' motivation and interests, (3) using students' perceptions, and (4) giving questions. Whereas Teacher Talk can directly occur in terms of (1) informing something, (2) giving direction, and (3) justifying student authority.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion of this study, it was concluded that: (a) there are 7 categories of Teacher Talks displayed by Lecturers when interacting in class, namely: (1) starting or opening a class; (2) provide an explanation; (3) Give instructions; (4) Asking questions; (5) Encourage and motivate; (6) Provide Reinforcement; and (7) Closing the Teaching and Learning Process; (b) The indirect Teacher Talk category that dominates in classroom interaction is asking questions.

Suggestions related to the description of the results and discussion of this study, as follows: (a) It is recommended to lecturers especially those teaching in EFL classes to plan Teacher Talk and the duration used in the teaching and learning process; (b) In accordance with the conclusion that indirect Teacher Talk that dominates in class interaction is giving questions, the Lecturer is expected to pay attention to the type and purpose of the questions raised during the teaching and learning process; (c) For further researchers, it is recommended to more specifically examine the type of Teacher Talk and utterance, especially the questions raised by the Lecturer and the patterns of interaction between the Lecturer and students in the class.

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