

Teacher Interaction Analysis by Using Initiation, Response and Feedback (IRF)

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Abstract: This study examines how the IRF model and teacher feedback strategies influence student participation in an Indonesian elementary school classroom. By analyzing teacher-student interactions, it aims to highlight the balance between structured instruction and student autonomy in foreign language learning. A summary of a review of foreign language learning for elementary school students regarding recognizing the names of fruits and constructing sentences with the names of these fruits is a good start to learning a foreign language, where students are given a lot of vocabulary as initial capital for them to compose sentences and speak, while the role of the teacher Here, apart from being a material provider, the teacher also becomes a judge who is able to reflect on what students do and provide feedback that builds students to learn English better.

INTRODUCTION

English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia, starting from elementary school to the university level. Given this context, teachers must be equipped to handle diverse learners, ranging from beginners to advanced students. One illustrative example of this learning process is an elementary school classroom in Indonesia, where structured interaction plays a crucial role in language acquisition.

This study examines a 23-minute English lesson conducted in a second-grade elementary classroom consisting of six students (two male and four female). The lesson focuses on introducing fruit names (e.g., banana, mango) and constructing simple sentences using newly acquired vocabulary, such as "Do you like bananas?" and "Yes, I like bananas." Since English is a foreign language in Indonesia, the primary objective of this lesson is to familiarize students with basic vocabulary and sentence structures, ensuring they can use these elements in simple conversations.

The lesson is structured around teacher-led activities, including attendance checking, vocabulary introduction through songs and images, sentence construction exercises, group work, and evaluation. The teacher plays a dominant role, providing instructions, modeling correct responses, and offering feedback. However, while this teacher-centered approach ensures clarity and structure, it may limit opportunities for student interaction and independent language use (Walsh, 2011). By analyzing the patterns of interaction in this classroom, this study aims to explore how teacher feedback and interactional strategies influence student engagement and language acquisition.

One of the most widely recognized frameworks for classroom interaction is the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) model, developed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). This model structures discourse into three sequential moves: (1) Initiation (teacher prompts student participation), (2) Response (student answers), and (3) Feedback (teacher acknowledges or corrects the response). The IRF model provides a clear structure for learning, facilitating classroom management and language

development (Walsh, 2011). However, while IRF sequences ensure lesson coherence, they can also restrict extended student discourse and limit opportunities for self-repair (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Feedback strategies play a vital role in shaping students' linguistic development. According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), feedback can be categorized into explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, and elicitation. While explicit correction provides immediate clarity, elicitation and clarification requests encourage students to reflect on their mistakes and develop self-correction skills. Encouraging self-repair fosters deeper cognitive engagement and metalinguistic awareness, leading to long-term language retention (Ellis, 2008).

In teacher-centered classrooms, where interaction is largely controlled by the teacher, students may passively receive knowledge without actively constructing language (Musumeci, 1996). Studies have shown that excessive teacher talk can reduce students' opportunities to practice language output, leading to lower engagement and retention (Swain, 1985). To balance teacher guidance with student participation, it is recommended that teachers implement interactive strategies such as open-ended questioning, peer discussion, and task-based learning (Mitchell & Martin, 1997). These approaches encourage students to actively use the language rather than solely responding to teacher prompts.

The role of the teacher extends beyond providing instruction to facilitating meaningful communication. Schmidt (1993) and Thornbury (1999) argue that students need extensive exposure to spoken language and opportunities for interaction to develop fluency. Language learning is a gradual process that involves acquiring vocabulary, constructing sentences, understanding meaning, and using language for

communication (Pica, 1994). In this context, the teacher acts as a facilitator and interlocutor, guiding students through structured practice while also encouraging independent language production.

This study examines how the IRF model and teacher feedback strategies influence student participation in an Indonesian elementary school classroom. By analyzing teacher-student interactions, it aims to highlight the balance between structured instruction and student autonomy in foreign language learning.

METHODOLOGY.

This study uses a mixed method which combines qualitative and quantitative data in one study in order to gain a more complete and in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). The research design used in this study is categorized as survey research. The objective of the researcher is to comprehend real-life behavior by gathering survey data for analysis. A motivation questionnaire was employed to identify the motivational aspects that emerge, as well as the TikTok features that contribute to speaking skill acquisition. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

English in Indonesia is a foreign language, while English lesson is taught to students starting elementary school to the university level, so teacher have to be able handle and teach students from basic lesson or introducing english vocabulary for the new English learners to the high

level learners. Here are one of the example of learning process that placed in one class of elementary school in Indonesia.

Based on references to the learning video taken, one lesson process is around twenty three minutes arranged by one teacher in one class. This learning was carried out in the second grade of elementary students which consisted of six students, two male students and four female students. Today's learning material is about introducing name of fruits like banan, mango and etc, then students learn how to constructing sentences using new vocabulary for the names of these fruits like "do you like banana?, yes, I like banana? And etc". As we know, Indonesia uses English lessons as a foreign language, where learning starts from elementary school to university level, therefore for the second grade of elementary school today's learning objective is an introduction to English vocabulary about the names of fruits and their use in sentences.

The learning objectives in today's teaching and learning activities are that students are expected to be able to recognize new vocabulary regarding fruit names. It is hoped that students will be able to compose question sentences using new vocabulary such as "Do you like fruits?", it is hoped that students will be able to answer questions with answers using grammatical sentences, such as "Yes, I like fruits or no, I don't like fruits" and the final learning objective is that students are expected to be able to formulate questions about "what fruit do they like?" And it is hoped that students will be able to answer the types of fruit they like, such as "I like a banana". From all the learning objectives above, it is hoped that students will be able to use their new vocabulary to speak Basic English.

The learning objective of this lesson is based on the activity during the lesson. For today's meeting the teacher give some activities to

convey the materials about the name of fruits and how to make a close ended question sentences. And here are for another kinds of the activities, firstly the teacher checking the attendance by asking to students “who are absent today and the reason why does he or she absent today”, for the opening teacher give an ice breaking about singing the name of fruits then teacher ask students to guess what fruits is it, the next activities is sticking the fruits’ picture on the cupboard based on the teacher’s instruction, after that teacher explaining about sentence arrangement about closes ended question “do you like fruits?” and how to answer the question “yes, I like fruits or no, I don’t like fruits” then teacher ask students practice to the student beside of them, after that the teacher give another ice breaking “claps based on the names of fuits, if the teacher say apple so students have to clap once, banana two clasps and mango three clasps” after the ice breaking the teacher ask students to make a group consist of two students to do worksheet in LKPD (Lembar Kerja Peserta Didik) next one of student in a group have to presenting what they have done and the teacher give feedback related what students presented, and the last activity is evaluation by crosschecking students’ understanding one by one

As I explained before English is a foreign language in Indonesia, so the learning activities, the interaction rely on the teacher, around 65% to 70% of those who give instructions and provide feedback are teachers, while the task of the students is to answer and carry out instructions from the teacher, agrees with Steve Walsh in his book entitled Investigating Classroom Discourse where learning second to foreign languages, The central interaction of learning process is the teacher or uses decentralization interaction so that students only receive learning material and carry out instructions from the teacher.

Examples of activities from teacher interaction with students such as the teacher explaining new vocabulary material regarding fruit names and constructing sentences using the fruit names, then the teacher giving many instructions to students to do on their worksheets and match them together by the teacher asking one of the students to explain their answer and then the student answer from the worksheet without providing concrete reasons. After that, the teacher gives feedback on the student's answers by conveying the correct answers without any reason and explanation again. Actually, if the teacher gives space to students to give their opinions to speak, the teacher has to ask students, such as "What is your reason for choosing that answer? or Why did you answer that?" This makes students more active in the learning process even though they still have a limited vocabulary in English but it can force students to study English independently rather than the materials fed by the teacher.

In learning English as a foreign language, there are mostly pros and cons regarding interactions from teacher to students that only focus on the teacher or teacher as a learning facilitator, whereas on the one hand, English teachers in English as a foreign language countries are asked to be extra patient in training students to speak English by introducing various vocabulary. English vocabulary comes first before asking students to write and speak English so that it gives the impression that the teacher is feeding all the material to the students.

This agrees with (Mitchel and Martin, 1997) in Stave Walsh's book, where he stated that handing over all assignments to students who are just learning English is not effective and sufficient to promote foreign language acquisition, but there needs to be guidance and the role of the teacher to organize and provide material first but based on findings from (Musumeci, 1996) Stave Walsh's book, if the orientation of the

interaction is only centered on the teacher or the teacher explain more, then many students will be quieter and as if they already understand what the teacher has explained, but most of them are embarrassed to express what they don't understand regarding the material that has been explained so far. On the other hand, there are cons to this. To educate students to be more independent in learning, the learning and interaction system should not be decentralized to the teacher, but students should also be asked to actively speak and convey what they know about the learning material like a teacher asking the students to explain "why students choose this answer? describing about fruits in general or make a study group in each material and presented what students have studied with their study group". In this learning process actually teacher gives one study group activity to make students be able to study independently and able to socialize with their friends in class. The group contains two students for doing LKPD (Lembar Kerja Peserta Didik) and the teacher give time around five to seven minutes to do it then one of the students in the group will present one question on the worksheet in LKPD (Lembar Kerja Peserta Didik).

Based on (Swain, 1985) and some researchers the Stave Walsh's book suggests that speaking is actually more important rather than second language proficiency because when we often hear people speaking English and speak English, over time we will get used to it. For students the important output that students need to develop is proper linguistics and coherence, students are encouraged to speak English often, so it is not only the teacher who is the center who speaks a lot in front but students are also expected to be able to use their English to speak both to their friends and to the teacher.

Meanwhile, when we speak, it is necessary not only to have a lot of vocabulary but also to be able to construct a series of sentences and give feedback to the interlocutors. Here is where the role of the teacher as an instructor is needed to guide students who initially could not speak English at all to be able to construct sentences and speak English well.

According to the opinion of Schmidt, 1993; Batstote, 1994; Thornburry, 1999) in Stave Walsh's book, at the beginning of learning a new language, it is natural that many difficulties will arise in understanding the language, but students have the potential to internalize the new language into a language that they can speak fluently, but this requires a long process, starting from introducing new vocabulary, composing simple sentences, composing complex sentences, the ability to hear and understand language and use that language for interaction. If all foreign language learning processes are carried out in a classroom environment, the teacher has the main role in becoming a facilitator, interlocutor and judge who is able to provide feedback that builds students' potential to be more active in learning and practicing English.

Language has a pedagogical function according to (Pica, 1994) in Stave Walsh's book in the sense that the use of language can influence the smoothness of interpersonal communication, therefore when starting learning it is hoped that the judges will be able to provide input and justify vocabulary or sentence construction. The judge who is able to provide feedback is the teacher . The impression is that teachers act very much in the process of learning a new language and of course that is the real truth where teachers are required to introduce language to students from introducing vocabulary, composing simple sentences, composing complex sentences, listening to understanding the language to speaking the language and during the learning process teachers are also required

to be judges who are able to provide feedback and justify students' mistakes. In addition to the teacher's role function as previously mentioned, in a formal context teachers are able to help students maximize their interactive potential so that opportunities for conversation between interlocutors are not lost, providing improvements and corrective feedback on what students have done are examples of teachers being able to monitor, facilitate and reflection of student.

Apart from the important role of the teacher, students are also the main milestone in whether learning progresses or not, even though the teacher has facilitated, become a friend of language learning, but if students do not want to learn from mistakes or try to develop then what the teacher is trying is in vain. The following is what students should do when starting to learn a foreign language, namely to acquire as many new vocabulary words as possible and then memorize them and use them. With a rich vocabulary, students are able to confidently compose sentences and speak. Efforts to find new vocabulary can be sought by watching foreign language films, listening to foreign language songs, then after getting a lot of new vocabulary, start to make sentences with the correct structure and use the vocabulary you have learned and if you feel there is something wrong with your sentence, ask for it. ask the teacher to correct and give feedback. The third point to be more trained is to often hear conversations using the foreign language and the last point is don't be embarrassed to speak the foreign language and ask for reflection on the use of the language.

CONCLUSION

A summary of a review of foreign language learning for elementary school students regarding recognizing the names of fruits and constructing sentences with the names of these fruits is a good start to learning a foreign language, where students are given a lot of vocabulary as initial capital for them to compose sentences and speak, while the role of the teacher Here, apart from being a material provider, the teacher also becomes a judge who is able to reflect on what students do and provide feedback that builds students to learn English better.

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