

## AN ANALYSIS OF LECTURER TALK DURING TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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### ABSTRACT

Researching teacher talk during teaching and learning process of English is essential because it offers practical implications for the improvement of teaching and learning process. However, there are still few studies which try to compare types of talk used by lecturers who teach content and skill subjects. This research investigates the types and the dominant types of lecturer talk during the teaching and learning process at an English Education Department. The participants were two English lecturers at a private University in Malang who taught Vocabulary (skill subject) and Poetry (content subject) classes. The researchers used an audio recorder to record the utterances by the lecturers. The data were analyzed qualitatively by using FIAC (Flanders Interaction Analysis Category). The types of lecturer talk produced by the lecturer who taught Vocabulary were *Ask question*, *Give direction*, *Give lecture*, *Accept or use students' idea*, *Praise or encourage*, and *Criticize or justify authority*. The types of lecturer talk produced by the lecturer who taught Poetry were *Give lecture*, *Ask question*, *Accept or use students' idea*, *Give direction*, *Praise or encourage*, and *Criticize or justify authority*. The most dominant types of talk produced by the lecturer who taught Vocabulary were *Ask question* and *Give direction* but *Give lecture* was the most dominant types of talk produced by the lecturer who taught Poetry. This finding indicates that types of course taught by lecturers affect the kinds of talk produced by the lecturers.

*Keywords: Flanders Interaction Analysis Category, Lecturer Talk, English as a Foreign Language*

### INTRODUCTION

Teacher talk is important and cannot be separated from the teaching and learning process. Teachers' explanation is still considered as the most important part of the teaching and learning process. Through the teachers' explanation, students can understand the lesson, but some teachers just give lecturing without giving questions to the students. Asking a question to students is important. A teacher can find out how far the students understand the lesson being taught by asking a question. When the students have answered the question, the teacher should give praise, receive, and repeat the answer at the same time the teacher corrects the answer from the students. This will provide variations in the teaching and learning process because the explanation or example is not only from the teacher but also from the idea of the students themselves.

According to Allwright and Bailey (1991), talk is still an important aspect in the teaching and learning process not only because it is one of the main ways of conveying information but also because it is an essential means to control students' learning behavior.

Ellis (1985) defines that teacher talk is the special language that the teacher uses when addressing L2 to the learners in the classroom. Teacher talk can be useful and applicable language practice that gives the benefit to the learner. Teachers and learners use their talks to interact with each other.

This research used Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (in Aisyah, 2016) as the theoretical foundation in analyzing teacher or lecturer talk, which divide the talk into seven categories, i.e., Accept feeling, Praise or encourage, Accept or uses students' idea, Ask question, Give lecture, Give direction, and Criticize and Justify authority.

### **Accept Feeling**

Accepting students' feelings can build a classroom environment that supports the teaching and learning process as well as gives confidence and engage students in the teaching and learning process. Here is the example of accepts feeling category:

Lecturer : Why are you sad Toni?

Student : Sir, I lost my pocket money

Lecturer : *Well, that is enough to make one sad, but cheer up, a replacement will come up.*

### **Praise or Encourage**

A teacher or lecturer should praise or encourage the students when they have good behavior or when they answer the question; it will make the students feel more confident so they will try to answer the question when the teacher or lecturer asks questions again. Here is the example of praise or encourage category:

Lecturer : Can you give the example of preposition?

Student : He sat on chair.

Lecturer : Yes, he sat on chair. *Good.*

### **Accept Or Uses Students' Idea**

When students' idea is accepted or used by the teacher or lecturer, the students will feel that the teacher appreciate them, and the students will have the courage to deliver their idea again. It will be different when the teacher or lecturer does not accept or use students' ideas; the student will think that his or her answer is unacceptable, so the student would not have the courage to deliver his or her idea again. Here is the example of accepting or using students' idea category:

Lecturer : And the second topic, it's about verb. What is verb?

Student : Action

Lecturer : *Yes, verb is action.*

### **Ask Question**

Asking questions can be a way to make students speak up. When the students answer that question, the teacher or lecturer will know how far the students understand the topic. There is a moment when he/she asks a question to his/her students, but the teacher or lecturer does not wait for the answer from the students and keep going on their lecture without receiving any answers, this is not included in this category (Flanders, in Aisyah 2016). Here is the example of ask question category:

Lecturer : OK, now we will talk about the first topic in your book. Open your book. *Boys, where is your book?*

### **Give Lecture**

Lecturing is one of the main classroom activities where a teacher or lecturer gives information or instruction to the students. Here is the example of giving lecture category:

Lecturer : The first about noun. *Noun is a thing and nouns are the basic building blocks of sentences. These things can represent a person, animal, place, idea, emotion, almost anything that you can think of.*

### **Give Direction**

Students need some direction from their teacher or lecturer to do their duty or some activities in the classroom to prevent misunderstanding. Here is the example of giving direction category:

Lecturer : OK, now we will talk about the first topic in your book. *Open your book, page. Open page 5.*

### **Criticize And Justify Authority**

The teacher or lecturer should make a statement intended to change students' behavior from non-acceptable to acceptable patterns. Critics should not hurt and make the student down. Here is the example of criticizing and justifying authority category:

Lecturer : Because this is homework, *I have told you to make it in your home not here*

Several studies have been conducted to investigate teacher talk, for example, Purwadi (2016), Tyas (2016), and Putri (2015). In general, these studies found that certain types of talk are largely dominant in the EFL Indonesian contexts such as *Praise or Encourage* and *Ask Question*. This finding may indicate that teachers still have very dominant roles during the teaching and learning process of EFL, particularly in those contexts of studies. However, those previous studies were generally conducted in a relatively lower level of education institutions, such as elementary school, junior and senior high schools, and not university level. University students are usually able to do independent learning and

critical thinking better. Therefore, the lecturers may give more opportunities for university students to talk more and have discussions rather than giving lectures in which the lecturers talk less.

Based on the explanation above, the objectives of this study are to find out the types and the dominant types of talk that are used by the lecturers during the teaching and learning process of content and skill subjects. In the context of the present study, content subject is broadly defined as a course that focuses more on the delivery and mastery of knowledge, which includes courses like Poetry, Prose, etc. Meanwhile, skill subject refers to a course that gives more emphasis on how students acquire specific skills after a teaching and learning process has been provided, which include courses like Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing.

Based on the background of the study above, this research would address the following questions:

1. What are the dominant types of talk that are used by the lecturers during the teaching and learning process of content and skill subjects?
2. Do the English lecturers use similar types of talk when teaching content and skill subjects?

## **METHOD**

This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach. The main focus of this research was on describing the phenomenon of language use in teaching that is lecturer talk. The research was conducted at a private University in Malang. The participants of the research were two English lecturers at the University. The object of this research was the lecturers' talk during the teaching and learning process of content and skill courses: Vocabulary and Poetry. The researchers came to each class and did the observation for three times. The observation was conducted from the second meeting until the fourth meeting from sixteen meetings planned by the lecturer for each course. Each course in each class has two credits. The teaching and learning process took for 90 to 100 minutes for each meeting. In this research, the students were not involved as participants. All the students' activities during the teaching and learning process would not be analyzed because this research only focused on the lecturers' talk.

After collected, the data were transcribed and coded to identify the frequency of occurrence of each type of talk and the most and least dominant types of talk used by the participants. This study adopted data analysis procedures developed by Miles and Huberman (1994:10), which consists of four steps of activity: *data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification*. For the Data reduction step, the researchers used datasheets to help them in identifying, coding, and analyzing the data. In this research, the data were presented in the form of a table and description with the purpose of knowing the dominant types of talk that were used by the lecturers. For conclusion drawing and verification, the data which have been analyzed were read and re-read to develop the conclusion from the findings. The conclusion was verified by revisiting the data as many times as necessary. Verification was

done through expert validation. The researchers gave raw analysis to the triangulator. After that, the triangulator would check the analysis. If there were problems with the raw analysis, the researchers would follow the triangulator's suggestions. The result of the validation process showed that the process of lecturer talk identification and analysis was appropriate.

## FINDINGS

In general, this study found six types of talk used by the lecturers, those are (1) praise or encourage, (2) accept or use students' idea, (3) ask question, (4) give lecture, (5) give direction, and (6) criticize or justify authority. From the six types of lecturer talk above, it was found that *ask question* was the most dominant type of talk used by the two participants disregarding the types of courses they taught. Meanwhile, the least type of lecturer talk used was *criticize or justify authority*.

From the seven types of teacher talk as proposed by Flanders (in Aisyah, 2016), six types were found in this study: (1) praise or encourage, (2) accept or use students' idea, (3) ask question, (4) give lecture, (5) give direction, and (6) criticize or justify authority. Although there was similarity in terms of the types of lecturer talk used by the two participants, it was also found differences between participant one who taught Vocabulary and participant two who taught Poetry. Table 1 below lists the types and the dominant type of talk used by participant one who taught Vocabulary and participant two who taught Poetry.

**Table 1.** Types of Talk Used by Participant One and Two

	<b>Types of Lecturer Talk</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Participant one</b>	Ask question	35	31%
	Give direction	35	31%
	Give lecture	23	21%
	Accept or use students' idea	12	11%
	Praise or encourage	5	4%
	Criticize or justify authority	2	2%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Participant two</b>	<b>Give lecture</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>39%</b>
	Ask question	67	36%
	Accept or use students' idea	22	12%
	Give direction	17	9%
	Praise or encourage	5	3%
	Criticize or justify authority	1	1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note :

F : Frequency

% : Percentage

As listed in Table 1 above, the orders of types of talk produced by participant one are: (1) Ask question, (2) Give direction, (3) Give lecture, (4) Accept or use students' idea, (5) Praise or encourage, and (6) Criticize or justify authority. Meanwhile, the orders of types of talk produced by participant two are: (1) Give lecture, (2) Ask question, (3) Accept or use

students' idea, (4) Give direction, (5) Praise or encourage, and (6) Criticize or justify authority. The researchers did not find Accept feeling type of talk used by the two participants.

Considering only the number of occurrences during the teaching and learning process (the sum of all lecturers' talks recorded by the researchers), *Ask question* was the most dominant type of lecturer talk. Meanwhile, the least type of lecturer talk was *Criticize or Justify authority*. However, when a comparison was made between participant one and participant two concerning the number of each type of talk that they used during the teaching and learning process, differences emerged. In Vocabulary class, the lecturer used dominantly *Ask question* and *Give direction* talk types during the teaching and learning process. In Poetry class, the lecturer dominantly produced *Give lecture* during the teaching and learning process. The following sections provide detailed findings of the dominant types of talk (first and second-order from the list presented in Table 1) produced by lecturer one and lecturer two.

### **The Dominant Types of Talk Produced by Lecturer One**

#### ***Ask Question***

In this research, the researchers found that *Ask question* was the first dominant type of talk in the teaching and learning process of Vocabulary class with 31% and 35 utterances. Below are the utterances which were produced by the lecturer during the teaching and learning process in Vocabulary classroom. Please note that the statement printed in regular form is the initial sentence or statement before the lecturer *Asked question*. The italic utterances are the act of *Asked question*.

Example 1:

Lecturer : As we know there are homework and house work. *Do you know the differences? (AQ)*

Based on the data above, the lecturer told two new vocabularies and asked the students to differentiate the meaning of the two vocabularies. It is useful to increase the students' vocabulary.

Example 2:

Lecturer : Verbs are the action that words in a sentence that describes what the subject is doing. *Can you give the example of verb? (AQ)*

Based on the data above, the lecturer asked the students to give the example of *verb*. It is to examine the students' knowledge about the example of verb.

Example 3:

Lecturer : She have eaten a tree. The underline is "have", but actually it should be has. *So, what is the function of has? (AQ)*

As the data above show, after the lecturer read the first question the lecturer directly asked the function of *has* in that sentence.

Example 4:

Lecturer : Now, we will talk about comparative and superlative also singular and plural noun. *What is that?* (AQ)

Based on the data above, the lecturer asked the students about a new topic in this meeting.

### ***Give Direction***

*Give direction* was the second dominant type of talk in teaching and learning process of Vocabulary class with 31% and 35 utterances. Below are the utterances which were produced by the lecturer during the teaching and learning process. Statements printed in italic are the act of *Give direction*.

Example 1:

Lecturer : Do you know the characteristic of a good sentence?

Student : No ma'am.

Lecturer : It's in your book. *Vika, read the characteristic of a good sentence in your book. (GD)*

Based on the data above, the lecturer commanded her student to find out the characteristics of a good sentence and read it. In other words, the lecturer directed the students to read the characteristics of a good sentence.

Example 2:

Lecturer : *You need to classify the word, is it to be, linking, adverb, helping, or action.*

Based on the data above, the lecturer directed the students to classify the word in that exercise.

Example 3:

Lecturer : *Now, open page 30. There are some exercises; I want you to do it. I give you time until this class end after that you should submit it. Write down the answer in a piece of paper. (GD)*

Based on the data above, the lecturer asked the students to open the book in page 30 and did the exercise before the class ended.

Example 4:

Lecturer : The instruction just one. *I mention the word, you write the word. For example, I say "happy", so you should write H-A-P-P-Y. (GD)*

Based on the data above, the lecturer gave the instruction for their quiz to diminish the misunderstanding.

### **The Dominant Types of Talk Produced by Lecturer Two**

#### ***Give Lecture***

The researchers found that *Give lecture* was the first dominant type of talk in the teaching and learning process of Poetry class with 39% and 73 utterances. Below are the utterances which were produced by the lecturer during the teaching and learning process in Poetry class. To recall, the italic utterances are the act of *Give lecture*.

Example 1:

Lecturer : *Elevated language sounds poetic because it uses literary device such as metaphor, simile, or allusion. It is not the way we speak in normal life (GL).*

Based on the data above, the lecturer explained to the students about *elevated language*.

Example 2:

Lecturer : The story belongs to epic is a hero. What else the story belong to epic?

Student : Love.

Lecturer : What kind of love?

Lecturer : *So, the story of epic should not only the part of life story but should all part of the life (GL).*

Based on the data above, the lecturer explained the characteristic from the story of *epic*.

Example 3:

Lecturer : *Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets. Among this number, sonnets number 1-126 is for a (man/men) and 127-154 is for a (woman/women). The number is not clear yet because he refer to the woman as dark lady. So the girl must be mysterious (GL).*

Based on the data above, the lecturer explained the total of *Shakespeare sonnets*.

Example 4:

Lecturer : *For the next step, to be able to understand the poem. You need to be able to understand the diction. First you have to know the denotation and second it's the connotation (GL).*

Based on the data above, the lecturer told and explained the third step to *analyze poem*.

#### ***Ask Question***



*Ask question* was the second dominant type of talk in the teaching and learning process of Poetry class with 36% and 67 utterances. Below are the utterances which were produced by the lecturer during the teaching and learning process in Poetry class. Please note that the utterances printed in italic are the act of *Ask question*.

Example 1:

Lecturer : There are a lot of emotions in poetry. In poetry you are free to express your feeling or emotion.

Lecturer : *Do you feel sad when reading a research article? Can you feel sad, happy, etc. in poetry? (AQ)*

Based on the data above, the lecturer gave some question to prove that there are a lot of emotions in poetry. The lecturer perhaps, wanted to make the students imagined what they felt when they read poetry.

Example 2:

Lecturer : Last two weeks I have explain to you there are three types of traditional genres of poetry, they are: narrative, lyric, and dramatic. So, for today we are going to the next types. *What is it? (AQ)*

As the data above show, the lecturer told three types of traditional genres. By doing this the lecturer perhaps, wanted the students to remember that they have learned in the previous meeting. Then, she asked about the topic of discuss for the current meeting.

Example 3:

Lecturer : It's very close to song because of the word lyric, but lyric poetry is not a song. However, the history of lyric poetry is started from Greece.

Lecturer : *Do you know where Greece is? (AQ)*

As the data above show, the lecturer asked about *Greece* the place where *lyric poetry* started. By asking these questions, the lecturer probably wanted her students to imagine that Greece is in Europe, a place far away and a country which has a different tradition from English.

Example 4:

Lecturer : *Now, look at your poem. Can you guest what is the theme? (AQ)*

Lecturer : *What is the theme of your poem? What about you? (AQ)*

Based on the data above, the lecturer asked one by one the student about the theme of their own poem.

## **DISCUSSION**

In general, different orders and frequency of lecturer talk used by participant one and participant two were revealed in this research. In Vocabulary class (participant one), the lecturer produced six types of lecturer talk: *Ask question, Give direction, Give lecture, Accept*

*or use students' idea, Praise or encourage, and Criticize or justify authority.* The lecturer or participant two who taught Poetry produced six types of lecturer talk: *Give lecture, Ask question, Accept or use students' idea, Give direction, Praise or encourage, and Criticize or Justify authority.*

These differences could be the result of the different types of courses taught by the lecturers. Participant one who taught Vocabulary (skill subject) perhaps needs to ask some questions to the students to show how far the students have mastered vocabulary. Then, the lecturer needs to give some directions to the students to prevent misunderstanding when they did the tasks and activities in the classroom. Meanwhile, Poetry class is a content subject, so the lecturer needs to give lectures to explain many topics to the students.

In other words, the lecturers may have different assumptions and strategies in teaching which are suited to the types or characteristics of the course they teach. Since vocabulary is a skill subject, participant one may give more focus or emphasis on how the students master the vocabulary. Therefore, it is logical that she asked lots of questions to the students during the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, participant two who taught Poetry (content subject) gave lectures quite a lot. It is perhaps because she wants to emphasize how the students understand the basic concepts of English poetry and cover the materials required by the course.

The results of this study support the result of the previous study conducted by Purwadi (2016) in terms of the number and types of teacher talk used during the teaching and learning process. Those types of talk include (1) Praise or encourage, (2) Repeat students' response verbatim, (3) Ask question, (4) Give information, (5) Give direction, and (6) Criticize students' behavior. However, in terms of the orders, the results of Purwadi's (2016) research are different from this study. Purwadi (2016) who researched Junior High School found that *Praise or encourage* was the type of talk dominantly used by the three teachers in his research. This finding could be because of the students' level of education. The teachers in Purwadi's (2016) research perhaps give more emphasis on how to motivate their students to learn English. Therefore, they gave praises and encouragement to study English. As we understood, students in Junior High School are usually beginners in studying English and have relatively low English proficiency. The different findings between the present study and Purwadi's (2016) study can also indicate that levels of English proficiency and level of education may also give an influence on the dominant type of talk produced by teachers or lecturers.

The researchers also found the similarity of the most dominant type of teacher or lecturer talk between the previous study (Putri, 2015) and the present study. *Ask question* was the most dominant type of talk found in the previous study and the present study. The materials taught in Senior High School are usually focused on skill rather than on content. That is why the teacher should give questions to know how far the students understand and acquire the skill of English.

The result of this study (particularly for vocabulary subject taught by participant one) in essence seems to be similar to the result of Putri (2015) in terms of the most dominant talk used during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Putri (2015) and the present study found that *Ask question* was the most dominant talk used by the participants although the two studies were conducted in different levels of education. To recall, Putri (2015) conducted the study in Senior High School and this study was conducted in University. It indicates that a teacher or lecturer is still a dominant figure during the teaching and learning process. Teaching at University, a lecturer should ideally talk less and is more focus on using a type of talk like *Praise or Encourage*. However, this study found that the most dominant talk used by lecturer one who taught vocabulary was still *Ask question*, similar to what has been found by Putri (2015).

This interpretation should be, however, understood cautiously because the students' talk was not measured or investigated in this study. Therefore, we do not know what the proportion or percentage of talk is shared by the students and the lecturer in the study. For this reason, further studies should be conducted which measure or investigate both lecturers' and students' talks and the proportion of talk shared by them during the teaching and learning process. In this way, the result of the study would be more comprehensive.

## CONCLUSION

There were six types of talk produced by the two lecturers who taught Poetry and Vocabulary class. They were *Praise or encourage*, *Accept or use students' idea*, *Ask question*, *Give lecture*, *Give direction*, and *Criticize or justify authority*. Although both lecturers produced the six types of talk, there were differences in the frequency of use for them. The dominant types of talk produced by lecturer one who taught Vocabulary are *Ask question* and *Give Direction*, but *Give lecture* is the dominant type of talk produced by lecturer two who taught Poetry. This finding indicates that the types of course (content or skill course) influence the types of talk dominantly used by the lecturers.

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