
TEACHER'S TALK ROLE IN TEACHING SPEAKING

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Abstract

In the teaching learning process, scholars need to consider so many things. The two biggest things are students and teachers. Teachers as the focus of the present study are required to have many strategies in teaching. Consequently, speaking subject teachers need to speak actively in teaching and learning process and may use teacher's talk to encourage the students to speak and respond the instructions in the speaking class actively. The objective of this present study was to investigate whether teacher's talk exist in speaking class and to analyze the most dominant teacher's talk element used by the teacher and the teacher's reason to use it. Xiao-yan (2006) defines teacher talk (TT) as the kind of language used by the teacher for instruction in the classroom. In English teaching and learning, when a teacher just talks to their students and if their students understand, they are not only giving the lesson about the subject, but also may be giving the best language lesson (Hariyanti, 2005). Located at University of Muhammadiyah Malang, this present study used qualitative narrative design to obtain and analyze the data. Observation and interview were used to collect the data. Non participant interview was chosen to get the data of teacher's talk and the element of teacher's talk used by the lecturer. Besides, the structured interview was used to gain the information of the teacher's reason of using the most dominant element of teacher's talk.

Keywords: *Teacher's Talk, Speaking Class*

1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, learning English tends to be a need as it is becoming the global language used by Asian Economic Community. As a result, English is taught as a foreign language and have for long been the chief source of International language in the classroom. In teaching learning process, particularly in teaching language, sometimes teacher rarely considers whether what they say in class is able to encourage the students to be active to speak or not. As the fact, the teaching of English in our formal education was somehow out of the expectation. There are so many English teachers do not succeed in teaching speaking. Ironically, community will judge and expect that learner to be able to produce a spoken language well. We can see the facts based on the ability of students to speak English. Moreover, there are still lack of grammatical aspects and pronunciation coming from students, particularly the students in university level. From these facts, it seems that something is incorrect from their learning of English. It may come from the students or teacher as the parties in teaching and learning process in classroom.

Teachers who teach speaking skill highly required to have many strategies in teaching this course. It is not only a matter to deliver the material to students effectively, but also to have strategies to encourage students to be talkative in teaching and learning speaking process. One of the strategies that can influence the students speaking ability is teacher talk as the input of learning.

Xiao-yan (2006) defines teacher talk (TT) as the kind of language used by the teacher for instruction in the classroom. She explains that teacher talk in English classroom is as one special variety of English language, so it has its own specific features which other varieties do not share. Teacher talk (TT) is a special communicative activity in which its goal is to communicate with students and develop students' foreign language proficiency. In English teaching and learning, when a teacher just talks to

their students and if their students understand, they are not only giving the lesson about the subject, but also may be giving the best language lesson (Hariyanti, 2005).

The objective of this present study was to investigate whether teacher's talk exist in speaking class and to analyze the most dominant teacher's talk element used by the teacher and the teacher's reason to use it

I believe that teacher talk in language classrooms remains highly significant. I therefore decided to investigate its existence in University English speaking classrooms today and the most dominant element of it and the reason behind the usage of it. My adopted definition for teacher talk in University English classroom – “whatever the teacher says to students in class” – encompasses both English and Indonesian.

According to sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; 1981), learning has a social origin, as “humans are fundamentally communicatively organised beings. ... Just as our social activity is mediated through speech, so too is our mental activity” (Lantolf, 2007: 695). This confirms that the mediating function of teacher talk in students' language learning deserves attention. In other words, teacher talk as input for language learning and as a tool mediating language learning in classrooms might be considered central to whether the teaching goal of the reform could be reached or not.

Saville-Troike (2006: 74) defines input as “whatever sample of L2 that learners are exposed to”. But she argues that such input is not available for learners' processing unless it is attended to. Teachers might take it for granted that once they provide the class with input, students will naturally attend to it. However, it may be quite another story for students. Thus MacWhinney (2001: 69) argues that “we need to know how the linguistic input can be structured to maximise effective learning”.

Exposing all the information above, led me to ponder question: Does teacher talk exist in speaking class in the English Department of UMM? And more specific, How do teacher's talk elements influence the third semester students' speaking ability at English Department of UMM?

Answering these questions would throw some light on the understanding of University English teaching more broadly, taking a micro picture of teacher talk in classrooms towards a macro picture of the direction of teacher talk as a tool mediating language learning and the implications of this for students' English language development as well as for teacher development.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED THEORIES

Language can be described as the mean of communication of human being in organized combinations and patterns in order to express and communicate thoughts and feelings. For most people, language and learning are obtained by means of hearing and expressed by means of speaking. Without language, there could be NO learning.

In his statement, Chomsky (2012) says “When we study language, we are approaching what some might call the ‘human essence’, the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to man” (p. 5). Language is essentially unique to human kind, in terms that it has features and purposes to make it impossible to be separated from the natural environment of human being. Following the above idea, it is clearly defined that language is flexible and may develop further and close to each other. In line with this, Jendra (2012) said that the cases of homophones, homographs, synonyms, also express the arbitrariness; they all show that our language has some aspect of freedom-the arbitrariness, an essence to the system of communication of human kind.

It comes to statement that the varicosity and the development of language uttered by people are coming from the process of maintaining and developing language due to the complexity of language that comes from several features. It takes several source of natural environment to take as the language agreed by the society of environment as the tool of communication.

In teaching and learning process, learning a language cannot be separated from the four-macro skills, listening, writing, reading and speaking. It means that in teaching the language teachers must consider those skills as the main factors to measure the success of teaching language.

Saville-Troike (2006: 74) defines input in language learning as “whatever sample of L2 that learners are exposed to”, which includes sources both inside and outside the classroom, and in spoken, written or multi-media. Nunan (1991) specifies teacher talk in foreign language classrooms as language input and argues that “in many foreign language classrooms, teacher talk is important in providing learners with the only substantial live target language input they are likely to receive” (Nunan, 1991: 190). As further explained by Chaudron (1988),

because the learner either lives in another country or is isolated socially or economically from full participation with L2 speakers, the potential value of instructional access to the L2 increases by default” (Chaudron, 1988: 4).

The significance of teacher talk as language input to foreign language learning is thus commonly accepted of the studies on input, Krashen’s (1985) Input Hypothesis is perhaps the most well-known:

humans acquire language in only one way - by understanding messages, or by receiving 'comprehensible input'... We move from *i*, our current level, to *i+1*, the next level along the natural order, by understanding input containing *i+1*. (Krashen, 1985: 2)

This formulation is basically the embodiment of his statement in 1983 that when we teachers

just talk to our students, if they understand, we are not only giving a language lesson, we may be giving the best possible language lesson since we will be supplying input for acquisition. (Krashen and Terrell, 1983: 35).

According to Krashen, adults can learn a language primarily by exposing themselves to a sufficient amount of target language input comprehensible to them, yet a little beyond their development stage.

In order to provide learners with comprehensible input, modification is a necessary technique. However, “not all types of modified input are equally worthwhile” (Gass, 1997: 87), for example, simplified texts fail to enhance comprehension “because they strip away the richness in details and connections that help a reader perceive implicational links” (Yano et al., 1994: 214). In contrast, elaborative modification is beneficial for learning, as reported by Yano et al (1994) in their study of comprehension of simplified versus elaborated texts:

...elaborative modification of texts serves to provide semantic detail essential for second language readers to make references about the texts they read. Elaboration appears to serve the twin functions of most foreign and second-language reading lessons: (a) improving comprehension and (b) providing learners with rich linguistic form they need for further language learning. (Yano et al., 1994: 214)

Nunan finds that teachers are usually surprised at the amount of time they spent talking in class, as can be seen in his report:

In an in-service programme in which teachers were asked to record and analyse one of their lessons, one of the most frequent comments made by teachers asked what surprised them most, was the amount of talking they did (Nunan, 1991, p. 190).

Speaking activities will be good if teachers consider three reasons why speaking tasks are given to the students. The first is rehearsal; speaking activities should be designed to give the students motivation to rehearse what they have learned. The activities may like having students’ free discussion, that are believed to give them a chance to rehearse by having discussions outside the classroom. Another possible activity is having the students take part in a role-play of a real-life event that is usual in their environment. This may give them opportunity to practice like the real-life.

The next is feedback. Teachers have to design task that can make students try to use all of the target language they have already known, for this may offer feedback for both the teacher and the students. The teacher can control the class from the feedback. Teachers can evaluate whether the class is going well or not and to find out the problems.

The last is engagement. Speaking activities should be enjoyable and give high motivation to students. When all students can participate actively in an activity, they will feel completely satisfied

from the activity. So the teacher should set up the speaking activities correctly and give understanding and valuable feedback.

Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbol, in a variety of contexts. Speaking is crucial part of second language learning and teaching. Fulcher (2003) states that speaking is the verbal use of language to communicate with each other. The focus of skill is to increase the students' ability to communicate in the target language.

In addition, Burkart (2007), says that language learners need to recognize that speaking involve three areas of knowledge:

- Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary): using the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation
- Functions (transaction and interaction): knowing when clarity of message is essential (transaction/information exchange) and when precise understanding is required (interaction/relationship building)
- Social and culture rule and norms (turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants); understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason.

For EFL students, classroom is the main place where they are frequently exposed to the target language. Xiao-Yan (2012) defines teacher talk (TT) as the kind of language used by the teacher for instruction in the classroom. She explains that teacher talk in English classroom is as one special variety of English language, so it has its own specific features which other varieties do not share. Teacher talk (TT) is a special communicative activity in which its goal is to communicate with students and develop students' foreign language proficiency. In English teaching and learning, communicating on target language becomes the most important source of input. One of the most effective aspects in teaching and learning process is teacher's talk. Teacher's talk is the language used by the teachers addressed to language learners which is motivated by the need to communicate. When a teacher just talks to their students and if their students understand, they are not only giving the lesson about the subject, but also may be giving the best language lesson Krashen and Tarell (2005). In conclusion, what the teacher spoke becomes important, in order to communicate well to the students, and to stimulate, motivate, and encourage them to be active to speak and give responses by using target language.

In addition, Richards (2006) stated that teacher's talk is the variety of language that sometimes used by the teacher when they are in the process of teaching. In trying to communicate with learner, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of foreigner talk and other simplified style of speech addressed to language learner.

While, Ellis (2010) said that the definition of the teacher talk is very simple and self-evident. Teacher talk means that teachers address classroom language learners differently from the way that they address other kinds of classroom learners. They make adjustments to both language form and language function in order to facilitate communication. These adjustments are referred to as "teacher talk". Teacher talk is very important for both classroom teaching organization and students' language learning in the process of foreign language learning and second language acquisition, because teacher talk is an instrument of implementing teaching plan.

Since that it is very important to know the theories about teacher talk, it is clearly stated that teacher talk is the tool of delivering the materials including the way how teachers use the language that may vary to the students in order to simplify and ease to content of the materials given. It is very important that teacher talk plays important role to make the material understandable to the students. Furthermore, to encourage students to study and speak the target language, teacher talk can be a motivator to students.

Besides, teacher talk can be done only by those who have already mastered and understand class teaching activities. The importance of understanding teaching language appears as the dominant aspect. Brown (2000) says that teaching is showing or helping someone to do something, giving

instruction, guiding in the study of something, providing knowledge, and causing to know or understand.

Then, Burkart (2007) says that the goal of teaching speaking skills is communicative efficiency. Learners should be able to make themselves understood, using their current proficiency to the fullest. They should try to avoid confusion in the message due to faulty pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, and to observe the social and cultural rules that apply in each communication situation.

Based on the Burkart's theories above, it has become a great assumption that the language used by teacher should be clear and conscience. It is aimed to have accuracy for its content to make student easy to understand and encourage them to speak accurately and effectively so that the goal of the teaching speaking based on teacher talk will be accomplished.

There is no learning without teaching. It is very obvious that teacher talk has benefits in teaching and learning process. Besides, it will encourage students' speaking ability; it will also organize the activities of acquiring the speaking ability of student in the classroom. Nunan (2006) states that teacher talk is of crucial importance, not only for the organization of the classroom but also for the processes of acquisition. It is important for the organization and management of the classroom because it is through language that teachers either succeed or fail in implementing their teaching plans. In terms of acquisition, teacher talk is important because it is probably the major source of comprehensible target language input the learner is likely to receive.

Then, based on our environment fact, plenty of and high-quality input is the necessary element for successful language learning. There is no learning without input. "If the second language is learnt as a foreign language in a language class in a non-supportive environment, instruction is likely to be the major or even the only source of target language input". Stern (2006) (p. 11) . Here instruction refers to teacher instruction -- teacher talk.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This present study was intended to investigate whether teachers talk exists in teaching and learning speaking, and describe teacher talk in teaching and learning process that may encourage and stimulate students to be more active to talk. In line with the statement, then qualitative design was considered as the appropriate research design because it declares the contextual environment of phenomenon coming from the individual taken as participant without considering to manipulate any numerical data (ref). Following the researcher understanding in previous statement, Crotty (2012) emphasizes "Qualitative researches seek to understand the context or setting of the participant through visiting the context and gathering information personally. Then, this research used research subject as source of data since the researcher does not give any treatments or methods and place herself into the observation passively.

The subject of this study was a teacher of speaking class of third semester student at English Language Education Department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang, academic year 2013/2014. The instruments applied in this research were observation, and interview. Observation was designed as the main research instruments to answer the research problems. The observation was conducted by recording and taking notes. Then, the interview was also conducted in order to valid data, to confirm the data taken from the observation and to support the analysis.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher's talk is what the teacher says in class to deliver the material and to encourage the students to be more active in speaking in class. In addition, Xiao-Yan (2012) defines teacher talk (TT) as the kind of language used by the teacher for instruction in the classroom. Finding the answer of the research question, the researcher already conducted four times observations to gain the data. The result was found that the lecturer of F class at third semester of English Language Education Department used two types of teacher's talk when the lecturer was in speaking class. This finding is in line with Flanders'

theory (1985) stated in review of related literature section. It is mentioned that there are 2 major types of teacher's talk. They are indirect and direct influence. Below is the detail information of teacher's talk used by the lecturer of F class.

Indirect Influence:

Praising and Encouraging

Praising and encouraging is the teacher's intention to encourage the students to speak more, give them confident and to confirm the answer is correct, Flanders (1985). Based on the result of observation, some expressions used by the lecturer in praising were: "Very good", "Good", "Ok", "Yes", "Great".

Below is a quotation from the observation that researcher quoted to strengthen its statement. The lecturer together with the students answered the test.

Lecturer : "okay. What is the answer for number 1, *penjual*?"
 Students : "Seller"
 Lecturer : "*Good, seller*".

Based on the result of the observation, the lecturer used praising. It was done because it was an effective strategy to encourage the students to continue their tasks, to give them confident, and to confirm whether or not their answers were correct.

Asking Question

Asking question is the teacher's intention to ask question to the students. Flanders (1985) stated that the type of question used in teacher's talk mostly was anticipated question-answer or simple question. It means that both the question and answer are simple, and usually not fully in English expression.

Based on the observation, it was found that the lecturer of F class mostly asked questions to the students to encourage them to speak. Below is the quotation from the observation that researcher quoted to strengthen its statement.

Lecturer : "Okay. *What is the answer for number 1, penjual?*"
 Students : "Seller"
 Lecturer : "Good, seller. *Number 2, tersedia?*"
 Students : "available"
 Lecturer : "*number 3?*"
 Students : "Feature"
 Lecturer : "*dipojok kiri atas?*"
 Students : "in the upper left corner".
 Lecturer : "*demam panggung?*"
 Students : "Stage fever" (some students answered another answer) "Nervous sir"

The quotation taken from the interaction process between lecturer and students in observation result above shows us that the lecturer used anticipated or simple question to make the students speak and participate actively in speaking teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, asking question is also used to make sure that the students understand the material given by the lecturer.

Then the lecturer confirming the understanding of the students by asking

Lecturer : "*Any question so far?*"
 One student asked : "What if the letters h and t "*dibalik*" sir? So it is width".

The lecturer answered while showing the correct one on the white board.

Lecturer: "This is the correct one of the word, so please cross the incorrect one written on the board.

Thus, the researcher concluded that the lecturer also used asking question to give the students a chance to ask the material that they do not understand. It was also to make sure that the students comprehend all material given by the lecturer.

From the data above, the researcher might conclude that the lecturer used indirect influence by giving praising and encouraging and asking question to encourage the students to speak actively in speaking class. The result of the observational and the interview quotation that the researcher quotes is above.

Direct Influence:

Giving Direction

Giving directions is the teacher's way to direct, request, and give command to the students, it usually expects the students to do or follow the instruction. In line with that, Xiao-yan (2012) defines teacher talk as the kind of language used by the teacher for instruction in the classroom.

The example of instruction used by the lecturer can be seen in the following:

The lecturer: *"Now please pay attention to the function of the product. What is it good for? How does it work? What can I use it for? And now please repeat after me."*

Students: (repeated the lecturer) "What is it good for? How does it work? What can I use it for?"

Another example of instruction given by the lecturer.

Lecturer: *"Very good. Now please try to group these word stated here whether they are positive or negative. Understand?"*

Students: "yes sir"

Based on the information taken from the interaction/communication process between lecturer and students in observation result above, the researcher is able to identify that the lecturer gave instruction to the students to make them speak actively in the class.

To strengthen and to support the validity of the observation, the researcher reviewed the interview summary that researcher conducted on 13 December 2013. The interview result supported the data from the observation. The evidence was quoted in the interview quotation below.

Interviewer: "What is your strategy to handle the students who keep silent in your class? Besides, asking questions".

Interviewee: "Asking question off course, playing games can also activate the students to speak, or in the other hand, sometime give the task, or *give instruction to do or say something*".

From the interview result above, it shows that the answer from the interview matches with the information taken from the interaction/communication process between lecturer and students in observation result above. The lecturer used giving instruction in speaking teaching and learning process to make them speak actively.

Based on the observation and interview result above the researcher may conclude that the lecturer used both types of teacher's talk indirect and direct influence. Furthermore, indirect influence applied by giving praising and encouraging, and asking question. While, direct influence applied by giving direction.

The Elements of Teacher's Talk

In this part the researcher will answer the second statement of problem that stated in the previous section. The second statement of problem was asking about the element that used by the lecturer when the lecturer was teaching in speaking class. Based on the observation, it was found that the lecturer used the element of teacher's talk. The information of teacher's talk element is stated below:

The lecturer gave the break time by playing game called "Taboo". The game refers to today's material about describing product and how to ask the function of it. Each student was given to ask the lecturer about the shape, colour, and the function of something on the lecturer's table, and the lecturer answered. The last, the students had to guess the stuff that the lecturer meant.

Student : "What does it shape?"

Lecturer : "It's oblong"

- Student : “what colour of it?”
 Lecturer : “it’s transparent”
 Student : “what is it good for?”
 Lecturer : “It’s good for keeping other stuffs”
 Students : (screaming) “the container”
 Lecturer : “very good, let’s guess another stuff”

From the information above, the researcher may conclude that the lecturer used communication game in speaking teaching and learning.

The Teacher’s Reason on Using the Element of Teacher’s Talk

In regard to the third statement of problem, it was found that the teacher’s reason on using communication game as the most dominant element of teacher’s talk because the lecturer wanted to make the student relax and enjoy the class because the participant assumed that the class is little bit too long, which is 100 minutes and the students sometimes cannot concentrate that long. This finding is in line with the theory of Harmer (2007) that all of the communication games are aimed to get students speak as fluently as possible. This is proven by:

- Interviewer: Well, I also tried to find the element of teacher’s talk, and I found that you used communication game to make them speak. *What is your reason to use communication game?*
- Interviewee: One class is 100 minutes here which is little bit too long and sometimes people cannot concentrate this long. So, *it is a good strategy giving a break by 5-10 minutes of game.* It’s especially for Indonesian students, they love interaction. I found when I am asking question they are shy to answer or they ask their friends for the right answer, because the students are more like to work in teamwork. *If we are playing a game, they are not shy anymore because it’s just a game, they are not afraid, enjoy and active speaking.*

Based on the interview result above, the researcher is able to conclude that the lecturer’s reason to use communication game in teaching speaking is to motivate the students to speak without feeling shy or afraid. Furthermore, the lecturer gave a break to avoid the boredom in speaking class.

From this observation and the interview results, the researcher may conclude that the lecturer used teacher’s talk when teaching speaking to support the students to speak actively and the lecturer also used communication game as the most dominant element to support them feel more relax and enjoy the lesson.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, it is clear that the lecturer in F class used teacher’s talk to encourage the students to speak actively in speaking class. This idea is supported by Xiao-Yan (2012) definition that teacher talk as the kind of language used by the teacher for instruction in the classroom. Furthermore, Teacher’s talk is the language used by the teachers addressed to the learners which is motivated by the need to communicate. When a teacher just talks to their students and if their students understand, they are not only giving the lesson about the subject, but also may be giving the best language lesson Krashen and Tarell (1983). The researcher found that the lecturer used two types of teacher’s talk, indirect and direct influence. Indirect influence was not only applied by praising and encouraging, but also by asking question. Meanwhile, direct influence was applied by giving direction.

Next, the lecturer used communication game as the element of teacher’s talk not only to encourage the students to speak actively, but also to support the students to study comfortably in the class. As the information obtained from theories stated in review of related literature section, the element of teacher talk is the ability to process information and language based on the environment. It also stated that one kind of the elements of teacher talk is communication game.

In the last, the researcher tried to find the teacher's reason in using the communication game as the element of teacher talk. The lecturer wanted the student to enjoy the class because the lecturer assumed that the class meeting is little bit takes time, which is 100 minutes and the students sometimes cannot concentrate the lesson well in that particular period.

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