

## The Teacher Talk in Online Learning Verbal Interaction Using The Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System

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**Abstract:** This paper was aimed at identifying and classifying the types of teacher talk applied to the students during an online teaching, analyzing the realization of teacher talk, and explaining the reasons why the teacher talk applied based on Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS). A descriptive qualitative study was used for this study. The source of the data was an English teacher at SMP Ahmad Yani Binjai. The data were collected by using video recording and unstructured interview with the teacher. The findings of the results were: six types of teacher talk were applied by the teacher during an online verbal interaction in the classroom (Accept Feelings, Praises or Encourages, Accepts or Uses Ideas of Students, Ask Questions, Lecturing, and Giving Direction). The most dominant types was Giving Direction (63 times/22.99 %); Criticizing or Justifying Authority was not found in the interaction. In addition, there are 3 reasons for the teacher to apply the teacher talk, namely: (1) to influence learners' L2 acquisition of foreign language, (2) to influence the students' participation in the classroom, and (3) to motivate the students in the classroom.

**Keywords:** *Teacher Talk; Online Classroom; Classroom Interaction; FIACS.*

### Introduction

Students need to be stimulated by teachers in learning language as the goal of learning language is the ability to communicate using the target language. As the students spend most of their time in the classroom learning the target language, the classroom, therefore, is considered the most possible place for both students and teachers to realize the opportunities in speaking the target language. These opportunities are realized through the interaction between teacher and students as interaction itself is considered one of the effective ways of learning a language. Nurpahmi (2017:2) states that as students tend to imitate teachers in classroom interaction, teachers become important roles in both language input providers and also language models. It is no doubt that a teacher has their distinct acts in teaching, this could be shown by their lecturing, asking and responding to questions, giving direction or instruction, and also explaining. Therefore, the role of the teacher is important in class since they should know how to elicit students in speaking English.

The interaction itself is directly influenced by the teacher's talk. The term has been defined by many different perspectives. It was started in the late 1970s pioneered by Flanders (1970) and then developed by Moskowitz (1971). Flanders divided classroom interaction into two, which are teacher's talk and students' talk which is then categorized into verbal and non-verbal interaction. Verbal interaction according to Flanders cited in Helmie (2019) is the interaction between teacher and students using verbal language, which is the teacher's talk and students' talk. While non-verbal interaction is an interaction in which the interaction only uses facial expressions and giving gestures during interaction without actually saying anything. Flanders (1970) as cited in Nunan (1989:149) teacher talk is categorized into two main types, which are indirect influence and direct influence. Indirect influence consists of teachers' acts of acceptance of students' feelings and ideas, praising or encouraging students, using the student's ideas, and asking questions to the students. Meanwhile, direct influence is mostly about lecturing the students, giving directions, criticizing students' works, and also justifying their authority.

As the world is facing the COVID-19 Pandemic teaching and learning process could only be done through lenses. Having a different environment could be resulting in unfamiliarity and staggering. This was also found in the researcher's observation in an online classroom by one of the English teachers in SMP Ahmad Yani Binjai. In the observation for getting the preliminary data, it was found that the teacher's talk that occurred during the classroom interaction mostly was an indirect influence. The teacher focused more on asking questions, initiating the students to talk, repeating students' responses, and also making jokes to make the class to be more joyful.

Concerning the situation above, this research aimed to investigate what type of teacher talk applied to the students during an online verbal interaction in the classroom and how is the realization of teacher talk during an online verbal interaction in the classroom based on Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories System. In Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories System, teacher talk was divided into two main types which are direct influence and indirect influence. Therefore, the researcher carried out research entitled "Teacher Talk on Online Learning Verbal Interaction in English Classroom Using Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS)".

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Classroom Interaction**

Noni (1994) states that through interaction, students will be able to increase their language skills and level as interaction provides a lot of input and output through listening and speaking, encourage students more in using the language, and provides students' acquisition and acquaintance with the language. Further, Thapa and Lin (2013) explains that classroom interaction becomes the central factor which then will be able to enhance students' linguistic storage and also increase their communication skills. Concerning that, Naimat (2011:672) also adds that communication skills could be acquired through speaking activities, for example; debates, discussions, and also passionate topics among students. As interaction becomes the collaborative exchange of ideas, feelings, and thoughts, students have more opportunities in understanding and use previously incomprehensible language.

### **Types of Classroom Interaction**

#### **1. Teacher - Learner Interaction**

This interaction is mostly done by the teacher as it involves the teacher interacting with the students about the content of the lesson, asking questions, giving directions, and criticizing or justifying the students' talk. Through this interaction, students will get benefit from how teachers interact in the manner that is the most effective. First, they need to pay attention to what kind of language students understand the most; teachers should provide language output that is suitable for every student in the class. Second, as what teachers said becomes a resource for learners, they need to think carefully about what to say so students do not get misunderstood. Lastly, teachers need to pay attention to the voice, tone, and intonation as students tend to copy how they use the language.

#### **2. Learner-Learner Interaction**

This interaction should be well structured and managed to have the students get the cognitive development, educational achievement of students, and emerging social competencies. The teachers are expected to encourage students in this type of interaction so that students will become active participants rather than a passive participants.

#### **3. Teacher-Whole Classroom Interaction**

This interaction happens mostly in EFL (English as Foreign Language) classrooms as the teacher needs to initiate teacher-whole class interaction by asking questions and receiving students' responses. Teachers need to keep asking questions orally to stimulate students in

speaking. It could be said that this interaction is basic in making students talk more in the EFL classroom.

### **Online Classroom**

With the growth of online education, teaching in the online classroom has evolved as well. The concept of online learning is used to only describe learning through internet technology. Online teachers are critical in ensuring that students are not isolated and that effective online environments are created (Bolden., 2016). Teacher presence examines how online teachers plan, structure, and deliver instruction and outreach to students. Pre-built discussion questions, assignments, and resources, according to DeCosta et al. (2015), are signs of facilitator-type roles. In the online classroom, research shows that instructor or teacher interaction is important (Martin, Budhrani, Kumar, & Ritzhaupt: 2019). However, as the world is facing the pandemic COVID-19 and the urgency for online learning has increased suddenly. The sudden changes the teachers and instructors are facing hold them back in preparing a good interaction in the online classroom.

According to Lucas et al (2021), the sudden changes that affect interaction during an online classroom mostly occur around the problem of synchronous instructional activities such as video conference, chat, or phone. Both students and teachers could not synchronously interact with each other because of the less preparation. These days the growth of the platform for online learning has been increasing rapidly. It is not the only platform for submitting and grading tasks, but the platform for both students and teachers to interact as they used to also been used ever since the pandemic. Platforms for video conferences are the ones had been used the most by teachers and students. The platforms could be Google Meet, Zoom, Skype, or even the learning center that was made by the government and schools to facilitate students and teachers to be more interactive.

### **Teacher Talk**

Teacher talk, as described by Sinclair as cited in Yanfen and Yuqin (2010:77), is the language used most frequently in classroom interactions such as giving instructions, describing events, and testing students' comprehension. Richard in his book, *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (1992:471) defines teacher talk as the varieties of languages by teachers when they are teaching. Teachers frequently need to simplify their speech because foreign speech has a variety of characteristics, so they must do so while speaking to students. They determine how, where, when, and with whom the teacher talk is required and used in the classroom at certain times.

Teacher talk, according to Ellis (1985:145), is the distinct language that teachers use when addressing students in the classroom. In other words, in the language classroom, teachers approach students differently than they do in other classes. As a result, teacher talk is critical in language learning because it is a tool for carrying out a teaching plan during the teaching and learning process. Teacher talk is well-known to play a significant role in language teaching. It refers to the unique language that teachers use when communicating with students and instructing in the classroom. Hence, it is easy to see how teacher talk dominates classroom interaction. Teachers may feel challenged if students ask too many questions, but there are also occasions when teachers avoid the need for students to negotiate those questions.

Teachers are not expected to talk all of the time, as good teaching can be accomplished through an interactive discussion with the class or with specific students. Students should be able to learn not only from comprehensible input but also from their own. The "good lesson" is not always about students doing almost the same thing as the teachers or vice versa. A good lesson is carefully structured teaching and learning process in which students do a good amount of talking and receive feedback from their teacher on their performance, both formally and informally.

## Types of Teacher Talk

Types of teachers' talk according to Flanders that occur in the classroom are simply categorized into two sub-categories. Each of them has different functions and impacts on the students and with the right amount and measures of these categories, an effective teaching and learning process could be achieved. The two sub-categories of teachers' talk: indirect influence and direct influence are broken down into several categories. Indirect influence is broken down into accepting feelings, appraisal or encouragement, accepting or using students' ideas, and also asking questions. Meanwhile, direct influence is broken down into lectures, giving directions, and criticizing or justifying teachers' authority.

Table 1. Types of Teacher Talk

Actors	Interaction	Category Code	Activity
Teacher Talk	Response (Indirect Influence)	1	<b>Accept feeling:</b> accepts and clarifies the tone of the students in an unthreatening manner. Feelings may be positive or negative. Predicting or recalling feelings are included.
		2	<b>Praises or encourages:</b> praises or encourages students' action or behavior. Jokes that release tension, but not at the expense of another individual, nodding head or saying, "Um hm?" or "go on" are included.
		3	<b>Accepts or uses ideas of students:</b> clarifying, building, or developing ideas suggested by a student. As teacher brings more of his own idea into play, shift into category five.
		4	<b>Asks questions:</b> asking questions about content or material or procedure with the intent that a student answer.
	Initiation (Direct Influence)	5	<b>Lecturing:</b> giving facts or opinion about content or procedure; expressing their own idea asking rhetorical questions.
		6	<b>Giving directions:</b> directions, command, or orders which student are expected to comply with.
		7	<b>Criticizing or justifying authority:</b> statements intended to change students behavior from unacceptable to acceptable pattern; bawling someone out; stating why the teacher is doing what they are doing ; extreme self-reference.

## Interaction Analysis

Interaction Analysis (IA) is a method of observation that provides insight into what a teacher does when teaching. It is a method of detecting, researching, classifying, and measuring specific factors as the teacher and his or her pupils interact in an instructional learning setting through systematic observation. Interaction Analysis uses a categorical framework to encode and measure both teacher and student behavior in the classroom. The goal of establishing the observational system is so that teachers can be trained to utilize it to analyze classroom behavior, plan, and examine their teaching activities to improve classroom learning.



## **Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System**

Flanders' Interaction Analysis System is an observing instrument that classifies teachers' and students' verbal behavior as they interact in the classroom. Non-verbal gestures are not taken into account by Flanders' instrument, which was developed to observe solely verbal communication in the classroom. Flanders Interaction Analysis is a type of classroom interaction analysis that focuses solely on verbal behavior, primarily because it can be observed with greater reliability than non-verbal behavior and, more importantly, because it is assumed that an individual's behavior is an adequate sample of his overall behavior. Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS) is a ten-category communication system that is believed to cover all communication scenarios. When the teacher speaks (Teacher Talk), two categories are utilized when the student speaks (Pupil Talk), and the tenth category is silence or confusion.

### **Advantages of FIACS**

Buch (1988) as cited in Amatari (2015: 47) claims that FIACS has several advantages in Interaction Analysis (IA). It is said that the analysis of FIACS is so dependable that even a person that is not present when the observation was done could make precise inferences about verbal communication and get the idea of the classroom interaction without having to see it with their own eyes. This analysis is also said to serve as vital feedback to the teacher or teacher in training on their intentions and actual behavior in the classroom. This system also could be easily followed by the supervisor or inspecting staff. Flanders Interaction Analysis is said to be an effective tool to measure the social-emotional climate in the classroom.

### **Precautions in the Use of Flanders Interaction Analysis**

In using Flanders Interaction Analysis it should be known that only the observer should do the encoding work during the research since they are the most familiar with the entire process and are aware of its limitations. It is best to stop making assumptions about what is good and what is bad in terms of teaching behavior because this is only an explanation tool. Since the accuracy of the observations is also dependent on the observer's reliability, the classroom recording should be done only after determining the observer's reliability.

### **Limitations of Flanders Interaction Analysis**

It should be known that this system does not describe the overall amount of classroom activity. Some behaviors will be overlooked and there could be the possibility that the unrecorded parts of the teaching acts will be more important than those which are recorded. The sections on teaching that have been mentioned are often viewed as a teacher's teaching assessment. Some of them can be used for assessment, but only after the conclusion has been established and applied to the data can a decision be made. The framework review is content-free, focusing solely on classroom social skills and their potential as a testing method for a wider range of possible issues to be explored. This system is said to be 3tcostly and burdensome and requires forms of automation in collecting and analyzing the raw data. So it is known as an unfinished research tool as it has the potential for a wider application to other problems that could be explored.

### **Research Methodology**

This research used the descriptive qualitative method with the naturalistic inquiry approach. The descriptive qualitative methods are considered to be relevant to this research because this study involves with collection and analysis of the data to explain the existing occurrence within a natural context. The data were taken from a classroom interaction in SMP Ahmad Yani Binjai between an English Teacher and the eighth-grade students. This is one of the private schools located in Binjai, North Sumatera.

## Data Analysis

### 1. The Types of Teacher Talk Applied in Online Verbal Interaction

According to Flanders (1970), teacher talk can be classified into two types, namely Direct Influence and Indirect Influence. Based on the data identified, it was found that there were 165 (60.22%) teacher talks that belong to direct influence and there were 109 (39.78%) talks that belong to indirect influence. For further explanation, the data could be seen below.

- Indirect Influence

According to Flanders (1970) it is the way teachers stimulate students to engage in classroom interaction. This influence allowed students to be more active during the interaction. Indirect influence covers four categories of teacher talk, in which they are *accepting feelings, praising or encouraging, accepting or using ideas of students, and asking questions*. The percentages for indirect influence were presented in the following table:

Table 2. Percentage of Indirect Influence

No.	Categories	F	Percentages
1	Accepts Feelings	41	14.96%
2	Praises or Encouragement	46	16.78%
3	Accepts or Uses Ideas of Students	35	12.77%
4	Asking Questions	43	15.69%
<b>Total</b>		<b>165</b>	<b>60.22%</b>

From the table 2 above, it could be seen that there was about 165 teacher talk which was categorized into indirect influence. As Brown (2001) states before, indirect influence takes place when the teacher lets the students respond verbally in the classroom and encourages them with the intention of maximize students' participation in the classroom. This could be seen from the dialogues below:

#### Data 1

Teacher : What is notify?

Students : Notify... Semacam... Can I explain in Indonesian?

Teacher : Yeah, sure.

Students : Hampir sama kayak reminders, sih.

Teacher : Notification itu hampir sama kayak reminders ya?

Students : [Nodding]

Teacher : Ok, kalo notify berarti apa?

Students : Memberitahukan, mungkin?

Teacher : Ya! Memberitahukan. Exactly. Very good, Yohanes. Thank you

The teacher asks a question to the student to engage more with the student as the teacher tried to keep the conversation going although the student responded with gestures such as nodding. This was intended to keep the participation of the student during classroom interaction. By ending it with praises and encouragement, the teacher had the intention to make the student and other students keen on participating in the teaching and learning process. Brown (2001) states that

indirect influence will be resulting in a minimum teacher talk because the intention is to increase the student's talk.

- **Direct Influence**

Direct Influence according to Flanders (1970) is when the teacher increases their control in the classroom's activity and restrains student behavior, this would, of course, lessen the freedom of action for the students. Direct Influence covers three categories of teacher talk which are *lecturing*, *giving direction*, and *criticizing or justifying authority*. The percentages for direct influence were presented in the following table:

Table 3. The Percentage of Direct Influence

No.	Categories	F	Percentages
5	Lecturing / Lecture	46	16.78%
6	Giving Direction	63	22.99%
7	Criticizing or Justifying Authority	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>109</b>	<b>39.78%</b>

Direct influence, as it is stated by Brown (2001), happens when teacher takes the control in the classroom and results on minimum students' verbal response. Teacher tends to took over the control in the classroom interaction as most of the students need direction to interact in the classroom. When the online classroom was held, most of the students were passive therefore the teacher need to gave direction to stimulate the students' participation in the classroom. It could be seen from the data below:

Data 2

Teacher :So here is the survey, can you grab your device now? Your smart phone or maybe your tab? Your Ipad? Go to PollEv.com Rina Purnaman927. If its too difficult for you to type everything then I will.. Uh.. I will send you the link in the chatroom. (long pause) There! I have sent you the link. You just click the link and then answer whatever question is available there. Okay, so I have three words there display in your smart phone.

In the situation above, the teacher was giving directions to the students to do a certain action for the teaching and learning process. This of course limited the students' verbal response because they will focus more on doing the action they were told to. Although the teacher intended to make sure the teaching and learning process could proceed thoughtfully, the direction teacher gave limited the students' verbal response. The teacher also tends to limit the student's response by limiting the number of times students could respond in the classroom.

2. The Realization of Teacher Talk Applied in Online Verbal Interaction

According to Flanders (1970), the realization for teacher talk could be done when all categories of teacher talk from two main types, indirect influence and direct influence could be applied fully in the classroom. In the other hand, it was found from the present study that the realization of teacher talk in online verbal interaction do not fully conducted since the last category of teacher talk, *criticizing and justifying authority* was not found in the data analysis. The results for all types of interaction were presented in the following table.

Table 4. The Percentage of Teacher Talk Categories

No.	Types	F	Percentages
1	Accepts Feelings	41	14.96%
2	Praises or Encouragement	46	16.78%
3	Accepts or Uses Ideas of Students	35	12.77%
4	Asking Questions	43	15.69%
5	Lecturing / Lecture	46	16.78%
6	Giving Direction	63	22.99%
7	Criticizing or Justifying Authority	0	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>274</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the analysis of the data, it was found that there were 6 out of the 7 types of Teacher Talk based on Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS). The overall talks produced by the teacher themselves were 274 talks in which the most dominant type of interaction was *giving direction* with 63 talks (22.99%) and the least dominant was *accepts or used ideas of students* with 35 talks (12.77%).

### Discussion

This research discussed the teacher talk that was used by the English teacher in junior high school. Teacher talk was said to be one of the significant ways that teachers could use in delivering information and also control the behavior of students (Allwright and Bailey, 1991: 139). As teachers tend to adopt their language to the target language to promote the language to the students, teacher talk becomes particularly important in language teaching.

In analyzing the types of teacher talk and the realization of teacher talk used by the teacher, this research used the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS: 1970) which claimed that seven types of teacher talk are then categorized into two types of influence, direct influence and indirect influence. Direct influence included Accepting Feelings, Praising or Encouraging, Accepting or Using the Ideas of Students, and Ask Questions. While for indirect influence, there were Lecturing, Giving Direction, and Criticizing or Justifying Authority. It was found that the teacher did not use all types of teacher talk that Flanders (1970) proposed. The last type of teacher talk which is Criticizing or Justifying Authority was not found in the classroom interaction. Therefore, the realization of teacher talk itself is not fully conducted.

The reasons why teacher talk was used by the teachers were analyzed based on Krashen (1989) who states that there are several reasons for teachers to use teacher talk in the classroom, which consists of influencing students' acquisition of foreign language, influencing the students' participation in the classroom, and also to motivate the students in the classroom. The most used teacher talk was Giving Direction and based on the interview with the teacher it was found that the teacher tends to give direction most of the time because the students will not participate in the class if the teacher did not give direction from the start. The students tend to be more silent in the classroom and most of the time they will only interact in the class if the teacher appointed them or asked them by calling the name of the students.

The types of the teacher talk used by the teacher during the meeting because of the following reasons. The first was to influence the students' L2 acquisition or foreign language. The teacher tends to ask questions or direct them to interact more in the class to promote the target language. The teacher often appointed the students for them to speak in the classroom, the teacher stated that if this was not done, the students will not be able to talk or interact in English as they were supposed to in the future. The second reason was to influence the students' participation in the classroom, the teacher stated that if they did not start first the students will not talk nor



participate at all in the classroom. The teacher mentioned that when the online classroom started at first, the students did not participate at all in the class. Most of them tend to not join the class at first because of the lack of participation. Therefore the teacher often gave directions to the students to avoid this to happen again. The third reason was to motivate the students, this reason correlates with the previous one. Because the students did not have motivation at all, their participation could be counted as zero in the first online classes. Thus, the teacher gave motivation and encouragement to the students so they could be more confident to talk and participate more in the classroom.

## Conclusion

The main types of teacher talk identified in the classroom verbal interaction were both indirect influence and direct influence. The most dominant category was *giving direction* from direct influence with 63 talks (22.99%) and the least dominant category came from the indirect influence which was *accepting or using the ideas of students* with 35 talks (12.77%). 6 out of 7 categories of teacher talks itself could be found from the online verbal interaction other than the last category from the direct influence which was *criticizing or justifying authority* which was not used by the teacher at all during the classroom interaction. In addition, the realization of Teacher Talk in online verbal interaction do not fully conduct since the last category of teacher talk, *criticizing and justifying authority* was not found in the data analysis.

In regards to the last problem, the researcher found that there were 3 reasons for the teacher to use the teacher talk the way it was, namely: (1) to influence learners' L2 acquisition or foreign language, (2) to influence the students' participation in the classroom, and (3) to motivate the students in the classroom.

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