



Varying Interaction Patterns to Create Communicative Teaching and Learning

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Abstract This article has purposes to determine types and variations of interaction patterns that the lecturers applied in teaching. It is also to describe advantages of the interactions in students' learning process. A qualitative research was implemented where 10 lecturers who teach English at Language Development Center of IAIN Padangsidimpuan involved in the study. To collect the data, interview were given to lecturers and observation was done in ten classrooms. Then, descriptive data analysis was implemented in analyzing the data that were collected. The study revealed that all lecturers had tried hard to vary the interaction patterns in teaching. Several interaction patterns were seen dominantly used by lecturers, i.e. group work, full-class interaction, close and open-ended questioning, choral responses, and individual work. Moreover, there are some advantages that students can take from the variations of interaction patterns, namely; (1) students can share ideas with friends and lead them to be active, (2) students have lots of chances to practice English skills, (3) and interaction patterns makes the learning interesting and fun.

Key words: Interaction Variation; Communicative Teaching; Group Work; Individual Word; Learning Interesting.

Abstrak Artikel ini memiliki tujuan untuk menentukan jenis dan variasi pola interaksi yang diterapkan dosen dalam pengajaran. Artikel ini juga bertujuan untuk mengetahui manfaat interaksi dalam proses belajar siswa. Prinsip kualitatif diaplikasikan dalam artikel ini dimana 10 dosen yang mengajar di Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa (P2B) IAIN Padangsidimpuan dipilih sebagai responden. Untuk mengumpulkan data, wawancara diberikan kepada dosen dan observasi dilakukan di sepuluh kelas. Kemudian, analisis data deskriptif diimplementasikan dalam menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan. Artikel ini mengungkapkan bahwa semua dosen telah berusaha keras untuk memvariasikan pola interaksi dalam pengajaran. Beberapa pola interaksi terlihat dominan digunakan oleh dosen, yaitu kerja kelompok, interaksi kelas penuh, pertanyaan tertutup dan terbuka, tanggapan paduan suara, dan pekerjaan individu. Selain itu, ada beberapa keuntungan yang dapat siswa ambil dari variasi pola interaksi, yaitu; (1) siswa dapat berbagi ide dengan teman-teman dan mengarahkan mereka untuk aktif, (2) siswa memiliki banyak kesempatan untuk melatih keterampilan bahasa Inggris, (3) pola interaksi membuat pembelajaran menarik dan menyenangkan.

Kata Kunci: Variasi Interaksi; Komunikasi Mengajar; Belajar Kelompok; Belajar Individu; Minat Belajar.

INTRODUCTION

Interaction is one of important aspects that must be taken into account when the teachers teach. It is even becoming more important in learning context. Success and failure of teaching and learning can be influenced by the interaction patterns. In the classroom, the teachers and students are the language learners. The teachers learn from what they teach to students and the students learn from what they get from the teachers. When one of those two learners do not interact well with each other's, communication will fail. Successful language learners can be seen when the learners can use the language in meaningful interaction to others. They are able to understand other's speaking, able to express ideas or opinions; able to respond to other's speaking, and able to transfer their knowledge to others. Those successes are obtained from the successful interactions between the learners and teachers. This is in line with what Walqui (2006) said in her research.

Interaction is the essence of communication. Learning to interact in English means learning to communicate using English. Interaction is one the crucial things in learning because it is what the teachers and learners do every day in the classroom. They talk, challenge, interrupt, ask, and comment each other. Then, due to the interaction, there is always willingness to talk to others. In fact, both learners and teachers have the willingness to do that in the classroom (Kasim, 2004).

However, not all teachers can create meaningful and fun teaching and learning in the classroom. Monotonous pattern of interaction leads the teaching into boring and flat atmosphere. For example, if the teachers use pair and group patterns every day, that will be boring for students. Thus, the teachers have to be creative to create and modify the interaction patterns so that teaching can become more interesting and meaningful. Another example, the students will feel boring if they only can talk to a student next to them. Therefore, the teachers should give the chances for them to communicate to different students in the classroom.

In the context of teaching and learning English in Language Development Center of IAIN Padangsidimpuan, English is taught to students in the first grade every day. The students learn English for one and a half hour from Monday to Friday. With that condition, the teachers have hard task to do, in which they have to create fun and enjoying learning atmosphere so that learning is exciting for students. Then, they also should prepare the teaching plan well, as well as provide the material as nice as possible. Moreover, they need to design attractive media and games. Of course, they also must be able to modify and utilize the interaction patters as various as possible.

Therefore, this study has an aim to analyze and investigate patterns of interactions in teaching and how it gives effect to development of communication between teachers and students. Two research questions guide the elaboration of the discussion in this study, namely;

what is the variation of interaction patterns used by lecturers in Language development center? And what are advantages of interaction patterns toward communication?

In this study, the patterns of interaction used were from Ur (1996). The patterns were: (1) group work, students work in small groups on tasks that entail interaction: conveying information, for example, or group decision making. The teacher walks around listening, intervenes little if at all; (2) closed-ended teacher questioning (IRF), only one 'right' response gets approved. Sometimes cynically called the 'Guess what the teacher wants you to say' game. (3) individual work, the teacher gives a task or set of tasks, and students work on them independently, the teacher walks around monitoring and assisting where necessary; (4) choral responses, the teacher gives a model, which is repeated by all the class in chorus; or gives a cue, which is responded to in chorus ; (5) collaboration, students do the same sort of tasks as in 'Individual work,' but work together, usually in pairs, to try to achieve the best results they can. The teacher may or may not intervene. (Note that this is different from 'Group work,' where the task itself necessitates interaction) ; (6) student initiates, teacher answers, for example, in a guessing game: the students think of questions and the teacher responds; but the teacher decides who asks ; (7) full-class interaction, the students debate a topic or do a language task as a class; the teacher may intervene occasionally, to stimulate participation or to monitor ; (8) teacher talk, this may involve some kind of silent student response, such as writing from dictation, but there is no initiative on the part of the student; (9) Self-access, students choose their own learning tasks, and work autonomously; (10) Open-ended teacher questioning, there are a number of possible 'right' answers, so that more students answer.

METHOD

The concept qualitative method was applied in this study due to the objective which was to see types and variations of interaction patterns that the lecturers applied in teaching and to know advantages of the interactions toward communicative teaching. In analyzing data related to it, categorizations and elaboration in qualitative principles was applied. Talking about the population, the study was held in the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Padangsidempuan specifically at Language Development Center. Then, as respondents of the research, 10 lecturers who are regarded as qualified lecturers who teach first year students were chosen. The data were collected related to variations of interaction patterns and advantages of the interaction. In terms of data collection technique, 2 types of method of data collection were applied in this study. They were: observation, and interview. Observation and interview were conducted to find data about variations of interaction patterns and interview was given to respondent to know the advantages of interaction patterns variation. When the data have been

collected, then it was analyzed and elaborated based on the qualitative principles of analyzing data. Data elaboration and description were implemented in analyzing interview and observation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the observation result, it is found that there are three types of interactions patterns that the teachers often apply and happen in the teaching and learning process. Those three types of interaction are elaborated below.

1. Interaction Patterns in Teaching and Learning

a. One way interaction between the teachers and students

In terms of one way interaction between teachers and students, there are some models of activities that the teachers often apply in the classroom. First, it is conveyed that the teachers use this kind of interaction patterns in explaining some concepts and theories related to the topics or lessons in teaching, for example; when the teachers explain the concept of grammar about present simple, they tend to talk lots and students tend to listen to the explanation seriously.

Another type of this interaction is teacher talk (Ur, 1996). From the observation note, it is known that teacher talk is very seldom done by the lecturers because this interaction leads the learning into something boring and time wasting. Also, this interaction can not create communicative teaching and learning. This is in line with the theory proposed by Ur (1996). From the interview notes, it is recorded that the lecturers really avoid this interaction pattern due to the students' ignorance and boredom that will happen during the lesson. Here is one of the interview note derived from one of the respondents.

Interviewer : *do you often apply "teacher talk" in teaching? Why?*

Interviewee : *Hardy ever. "Teacher talk" is not effective to be used in my class, I really avoid talking to much in front of my students because some of them will be sleepy and even bored.*

b. Two ways interactions between the teachers and students

In terms of two ways interaction between teachers and students, there are some models of activities that the teachers often apply in the classroom. First, the teachers sometimes apply questions and answering in teaching in which the teachers gives some questions related to the topics and the students answer the questions in a pattern of one by one or whole students answering the questions. In this case, the teachers are active in giving questions and the students are also active and encouraged in giving the answers.

In relation to this type of interaction, there are some types of interaction that the lecturers often implemented in teaching. First, from the observation data, it is seen that Close-ended teacher questioning (IRF) proposed by Ur (1996) was very often applied. 8 of the 10 lecturers said that they implemented this type of interaction as a way to give concept checking and to see whether the students have understood the materials or not yet. In other words, to see students' understanding, the lecturers give a close-ended or yes no question to students and the students answer the questions chorally. Here is the example of close-ended questioning (IRF) given by lecturers in concept checking.

"A lecturer : Do we add s/es after verbs for third person singular in present simple negative?

Students : No.

A lecturer : What tobe do we use for present simple interrogative?

Students : Do and does."

Another type of interaction related to this case is choral responses or individual responses. From the observation result, it was known that choral responses type is applied more often than individual responses. It means that, most of the lecturers prefer asking all students in time than asking them one by one because asking students one by one will take longer time and tend to be boring. Here is the example of observation note about teaching opening using choral drill/responses.

The lecturer starts the lesson by asking students to stand up and make a big circle. The teacher gave a warming up by asking students to clap their hands. The teacher gave the instructions and the students responded while clapping their hands. In this case, the interaction was in form of choral responses in form of body moving.

The next type of interaction pattern that can be seen from the observation is Open-ended teacher questioning (Ur, 1996).

c. Two ways interaction between students and students

In relation to this kind of interaction, this study investigates that most of teaching and learning activity in the classroom have this type. One of the teaching models is mingling activity or full-class interaction (Ur: 1996) . In this case, the students are assigned to list some questions related to the topics such as, asking information in speaking skill. Then, they are instructed to go around the classroom and talk to some students and ask the questions. Thus, every student has a chance to be active and involve in the learning process by asking and answering the questions in this mingling activity. From 10 lecturers who were interviewed, 8 of them said that mingling activity was very often implemented in teaching speaking skills as well as grammar skill.

Another example of learning activities which lead students to have two ways interaction between students and students is pair or group work. It is observed that pair and group work activity are always used in teaching all skills including speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The lecturers said that applying pair and group work activity in learning was a must because the students tend to be more active and encouraged in learning when they share ideas with their friends and discuss problem together with their friends. Also, pair and group work could help teachers to make students interact socially with friends.

d. Interactions between students’ and learning materials

Talking about this kind of interaction, there are also various activities that are observed in which the students have this interaction. First, from the observation result, it is conveyed that the students were very often to have individual work (Ur, 1996) which means they do the task alone without any discussion with their friends. From the 10 lecturers who were interviewed, all of them agreed that individual work is given every day to test their learning progress toward the lesson. For example, the students have individual work in reading materials in which every student are asked to read the materials silently and loudly from the reading text, then they are assigned to understand the content of the texts as well as do some exercises from the text for example, true and false, WH questions, finding synonyms, and fill in the blank.

Table 1. Variations of Interaction Patterns in Teaching and Learning

No	Interaction Patterns	Variations of Interaction Patterns	Frequency of Implementation
1	One way interaction between the teachers and students	1. Teacher talk	Rarely
2	Two ways interactions between the teachers and students	1. Questioning and answering 2. Close-ended questioning 3. Open-ended questioning	Always Always Always
3	Two ways interaction between students and students	1. Full-class interaction 2. Pair work 3. Group work	Usually Always Always
4	Interactions between students’ and learning materials	1. Individual work 2. Self Access	Seldom Never

From the table above, it is seen that there are several variation of interaction patterns that the lecturers applied in teaching and learning. There are four interaction patterns that always implemented, namely; group work, pair work, close-ended questioning, and choral answers.

Then, there are two interaction patterns that usually applied by the lecturers, i.e. full-class interaction and open-ended questioning. After that, individual work is seldom applied. Moreover, the lecturers rarely use “teacher talk and students initiate and teachers answer” in teaching. Finally, self access is never implemented in the classroom.

2. Advantages of Interaction Patterns Variation for Communicative Teaching and Learning

The previous part of this article has elaborated some results and findings about variation of interaction patterns. In this part, advantages of those interaction patterns are mentioned. To get the data related to this part, written interview was given to all participants. From the interview, there are some findings are conveyed. The first, all lecturers mentioned that varying interaction patterns allows the students to share ideas with friends. It means that the students become more active during the learning process. For example, asking students to interact in pairs and group works make the students encouraged to talk to their friends and share their answers as well as ideas with partners and friends. These interaction patterns lead the classroom becomes communicative and interactive. From the chart, it is seen that all lecturers agreed and mentioned this as one of the advantages of interaction patterns interaction.

The second advantage that was mentioned by the respondents is the fact that students have lots of chance to practice English. It is seen from the chart that ten respondents said it so. Some variations of interaction patterns that can let students have chances to practice English are group work, pair work, and full class interaction. In case of communicative teaching, through these variations of interaction, the students can practice speaking as frequent as possible. The third, variations of interaction patterns also make the classroom becomes interesting and fun. Eight of ten respondents agreed with this statement. From the observation, it was seen that students really enjoyed the learning when the lecturers varied the interaction patterns. In other words, students tended to be bored when the lesson was passive and monotonous.

From the findings that have been elaborated in the previous section, there are some points that need to be discussed. First, in relation to variations of interaction pattern implemented by the lecturers in teaching English, it was found that group work and pair work were very popular among lecturers. It means that the lecturers use these patterns every teaching. From this reality, it seems that the lecturers have applied the principle of communicative classroom in their classroom. In that case, the lecturers want to make students able to communicate by asking the students to talk to their partners and group e.g. in speaking activity and other skills. This reality is suitable with what Brown (2007) suggested in his books that one of ways to lead the classroom become communicative is by asking students to work in pair and groups. Moreover, what was found in this study is related to what Sundari (2017) found in her

study saying that teachers tend to set the classroom activity to lead students interact each other or students-students interaction.

Similar to the previous idea, Dagarin (2004) and Nisa (2014) also propose group work interaction patterns as one of ways to improve communicative teaching and learning. In their findings, it was stated that group work interaction patterns was the best solution to fulfill students' need and to help students to improve English skills particularly speaking. In fact, the patterns of interactions that the teachers apply in the classroom really influence the successfulness of teaching and learning process, (Sari, 2018). The second discussion is relation to the interaction patterns that are very rarely implemented by the lecturers in teaching English. The findings show that teacher talk and students self access are not favorable among the lecturers. It means that students are hardly ever taught using those types of interaction. This is in fact because English teaching and learning is directed to build communicative skills specifically in speaking and writing. In addition, the level of students who are taught actually still in the level of elementary to intermediated level who need more attentions on basic skills of English. This is very different with what Rashidi and Rafieerad (2010) found that teachers tend to dominate a high portion of classroom talk.

Related to this case, Kasim (2004) in his research that investigated speaking ability in the lower level stated that lecturers should avoid passive class in teaching speaking for lower level students. One of the teaching methods that must be avoided is giving dominant time for lecturer to talk in front of the class. It is applied that teacher talk can lead the class into passive atmosphere. However, Julana (2018) found that IRF (Initiate-Response-Feedback) is the most dominant interaction patterns in her study and this lead the class into active atmosphere.

In line with this idea, Hermanto (2015) thought that in applying teacher talk in teaching, the teachers must pay attention to some conditions like students' level of proficiency, students' ages, classroom atmosphere, and types of lesson or skills. It is implied that implementing teacher talk probably suitable for mature students who study about lots of theories than practices. Rashidi and Rafiereed (2010) also agree with these statements. They analyzed patterns of interaction of certain teaching and they found that teacher talk is not suggested to beginner students who learn basic and communicative skills. Then, Kuna (2012) suggested discussion should be applied more frequent in advanced level students.

The last discussion is about advantages of varying interaction patterns in communicative teaching. From the finding, it is seen that all lecturers could see and feel lots of advantages of varying interaction patterns in communicative teaching. This is in line with the opinion given by Hanum (2017) saying that interaction patterns helps teaching and learning run smoothly and it can make the classroom communicative. From the variations, it is known that the lecturers are

creative enough in which they could vary the patterns and their teaching styles to fulfill students' needs. Rambe (2015) also found this reality in her research that says that teachers of Language Development Center could vary their teaching styles due to the need to facilitate the differences of students' learning styles. Moreover, Rambe (2019) also argued in her research that one of ways to foster teachers' teaching creativity is by varying teaching strategies in which one of the strategies is related to varying interaction patterns.

CONCLUSIONS

This part concludes some points from the study that has been elaborated in the previous section. In short, this study concludes that all lecturers who become respondents had tried hard to vary the interaction patterns in teaching. Several interaction patterns were seen dominantly used by lecturers, i.e. group work, full-class interaction, close and open-ended questioning, choral responses, and individual work. To create communicative learning and teaching, this study proposes interaction patterns that lead students to talk and engage learning activity actively such as group work, full-class interaction, and open-ended questioning. Moreover, there are some advantages that students can take from the variations of interaction patterns, namely; (1) students can share ideas with friends and that leads them to be active, (2) students have lots of chances to practice English skills, (3) and interaction patterns makes the learning interesting and fun.

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