Teacher Talk in Encouraging Students' Participation in the EFL Classroom

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Abstract—**This research paper presents the investigation on the most teacher talk used in an EFL classroom, how it encourages students' participation and the students' perceptions of the teacher talk and their performance. In this research, the writer employed a descriptive qualitative design. The data were gathered from video-recording and interviews where the participants were an English teacher and 36 seven grade students in Bandung. The findings indicated the organization of teacher talk in terms of instructional talk and management talk in teaching English language classroom for young learner provide students many opportunities to participate actively in the classroom. It contributed to increasing students' participation by giving initiation which leads the students to give responses, and students indicated a positive perception and attitude toward the teacher talk and their performances. The most teacher talk used were giving correction, asking instructional questions, giving an explanation, giving instruction, asking management questions, encouraging students, and answering management questions. Students' participation that encouraged the most was participation in class discussion, answering questions when called on, volunteering to answer questions, offering ideas spontaneously, and discussion with partners. Active participation is useful for students in creating opportunities for new learning experiences for language learning.**

Keywords: EF, instructional and management talk, students' participation, teacher talk

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers' role in encouraging the students to participate actively in the classroom marked as important (Turner & Patrick, 2004). Yanfen and Yuqin (2010) state that the success of teaching depends on a number of ways teachers talk and interactions occur between teachers and students. And the happening of interaction is affected directly by ways of teacher talk". They also said that teacher talk will create a good atmosphere and increase a closer relationship between a teacher and students and, at the same time, the interaction between the teacher and students will occur more often. Teacher talk is "that variety of language sometimes used by teachers when they are in the process of teaching. In trying to communicate with learners, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of foreigner talk and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners" (Richards, 1992, as cited in Nurpahmi, 2017).

Teacher talk has many values in the classroom interaction of young learners. First, it provides language input as a child's language model (Pinter, 2006). Second, teacher speaking supports students speaking in language practice. Third, the appropriateness of teacher talk can result in a warm atmosphere in the classroom and an informal relationship between teacher and student (Moon, 2000; Richards, 2003 as cited in Pujiastuti, 2013; Walsh, 2002).

There are several researchers who have attempted to profile the teacher talk by building up a list of characteristics associated with teacher talk in the literature. Flanders (1970, as cited in Pujiastuti, 2013) proposed a framework named Flanders Interaction Analysis (FIAC) which investigates teacher talk and students' talk. Teacher talk categories proposed in FIAC is consist of direct influence (accept feeling, praises or encourages, accept or uses students' ideas, and ask questions) and indirect influence (lecturing, giving direction, and criticizing or justifying authority). Zulfah, Rasyid, Rahman, & Rahman, (2015) study which focused on teachers' instructional and management talk, proposed 20 contexts of teacher talk found in the classroom. The instructional talk which is the language relates to transfer teaching material consists of giving an explanation, giving directions, giving correction, asking questions, and answering questions. While management talk which is the language relates to control and discipline in classroom consists of greetings, checking presence, giving instruction, giving direction, giving announcement, giving advice, encouraging students, giving reprimanding, giving praise, giving punishment, giving thanks, making humor, asking question, answering question, and closing activity.

Fassinger (1995) described student participation as any comments or questions that students offer or raise in class. Classroom participation is a fundamental interactional and pedagogical task through which students display their involvement. Participation in learning activities is, for several reasons, a valuable work habit. It provides opportunities for students to learn and practice new knowledge and strategies, explain their reasoning, and examine their thinking processes, and recognize the need to revise thinking. Turner and Patrick (2004) in their study, argued that students can participate openly in a number of ways, including spontaneously offering their ideas and thoughts, volunteering to answer questions, answering questions when called, demonstrating on the

chalkboard, talking to peers or teacher about tasks, and completing written work. Students can also participate by watching, listening and thinking without these behavioral indicators of involvement. While Crosthwaite, Bailey, and Meeker (2015) adopted measurement criteria of students' participation as preparation, contribution, group skill, and communication skill.

II. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive case study that will be analyzed through qualitative methods and a combination of simple quantitative, especially in measuring the percentage of each teachers' talk categories. This study was conducted at one of private Junior High Schools in Bandung. An English teacher and 36 students of seventh graders were involved. The data were gathered through six classroom observations and an interview with the teacher and students. The collected data from video recording were transcribed and then coded to categorize teacher talk types found and students' participation encouraged by the talk. Teacher talk types were coded using teacher talk in terms of instructional talk and management talk by Zulfah et al. (2015), while students' participation types were categorized using criteria adopted from Turner and Patrick (2004) and Crosthwaite et al. (2015). After the coding, the data were calculated to see the most types of teacher talk found and how students' participation types were encouraged by the teacher through the talks. Then, the interview data were used to see students' perceptions of the teacher talk and their performances.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Most teacher talk found in the EFL classroom

On the data from the video-recording, it is revealed that there are 20 types of teacher talk used by the teacher in the classroom. They are; greeting, checking presence, giving instruction, giving instructional direction, giving management direction, giving announcement, giving advice, giving correction, giving explanation, encouraging students, giving reprimanding, giving praise, giving punishment, giving thanks, making humor, asking instructional questions, asking management questions, and closing activity. All the talks were used in various amounts in six meetings observed and it is found that the most used teacher talk is giving correction. In order to provide a distinct portrayal of the teacher talk distribution, a graphic is presented to depict overall distribution from all categories in all meetings observed.
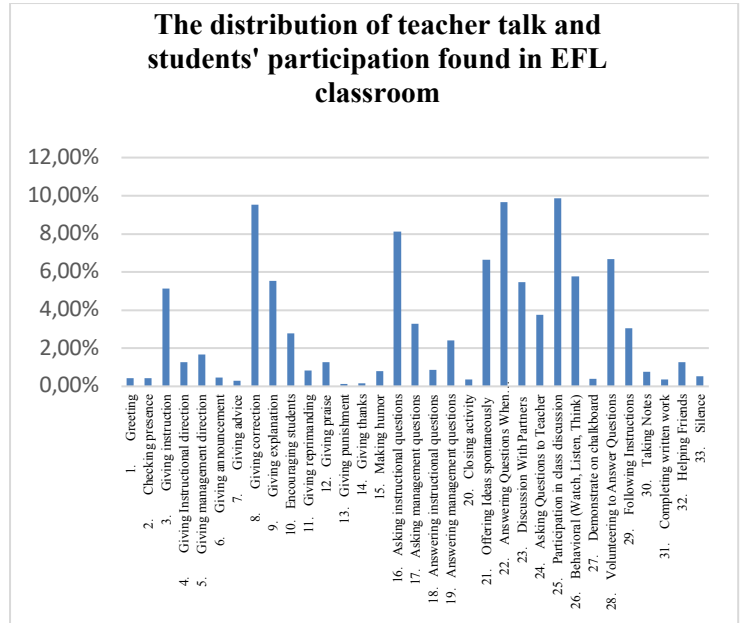

Fig. 1. The distribution of teacher talk and students' participation found in EFL classroom

From Figure 1, it can be seen that the quantity of each teacher talk is variously used in the classroom and the most aspect of teacher talk used is "giving correction" which took 9.54 % of the total percentages and the least aspect used is giving punishment which has 0.12% of the total percentages. The seven most used aspects of teacher talk were giving instruction, asking instructional questions, giving an explanation, giving instruction, asking management questions, answering management questions and encouraging students.

TABLE I.   GIVING CORRECTION BY REPEATING STUDENTS IDEA

	P	Data	Code
207	T	What month in this calendar? [showing the calendar]	16
208	S34	Moon!	28
209	S31	January!	28
210	**T**	**January.**	**8**
211	T	*Bukan* moon *ya* (It's not moon)	8
		Moon *itu bulan di langit* (Moon is on the sky)	
		Kalau bulan yang di kalender namanya, (On the calendar, it is named)	

Table I shows that the teacher used the idea from the students by repeating what has been said by the students (line 209-210). This situation indicates the teacher's clarification of the students' answers, which means that the idea proposed by the students was correct. The teacher first asked the name of the month shown on the calendar. S34 gave an incorrect answer and S31 gave a correct answer. The teacher closed it by repeating S31's answer and then gave additional correction by explaining the mistake did by S34.

The teacher also repeated the students' answer to give a clarification that the students' answer was incorrect or wrong in the interrogative sentence. The example could be seen in the table below.

TABLE II. GIVING CORRECTION BY REPEATING STUDENTS IDEA IN QUESTION

	P	Data	Code
342	T	*Kalau nephew sama niece kira-kira apa artinya?* (What is the meaning of nephew and niece in Bahasa indonesia?)	16
343	S19	*Anak laki-laki* (son)	22
344	S4	*Anak laki-laki, anak perempuan* (son and daughter)	22
345	T	*Apa?* (What is it?)	16
346	T	[Pointing at one student to answer]	3
347	S16	*Bayi laki-laki, bayi perempuan.* (baby boy and baby girl)	22
348	T	**Bayi laki-laki, bayi perempuan?** **(baby boy and baby girl)**	8
349		**No.**	

As seen in Table II, although the teacher used the sentence in an interrogative form, it didn't mean to ask any information. This situation indicates the teacher's clarification to the students' answer that "are you sure it is the correct answer?", which gave hints that the student did a mistake. The teacher gave an additional explanation that it was a wrong answer. Repeating students' answers or revoicing can be applied to clarify, to explain, to communicate students' ideas, and to make sure that others have heard, to repeat an idea in more academic language, or to expound on and extend the idea. In each case, revoicing promotes the forward progression of the discussion and places students as the active contributor to the class' thinking (Connors & Robertson, 2017).

The second type of giving correction proposed by Zulfah et al. (2015) is by giving a direct statement. The direct correction was stated in a declarative sentence which was used to show that the students did mistakes. The teacher also corrects students' by providing a correct form of answer or sentences. It can be seen in the conversation on excerpt 1 line 211. It shows the second type of giving clarification in a direct statement. The form of direct statement can be seen in the sentences; *Bukan* moon *ya* (line 211). In line 210, the teacher used this category in the ways of correcting students' pronunciation, she took more time to explain how to pronounce vocabularies related to family members by giving knowledge directly, through correction, or by delaying it with questions.

The high giving correction frequency is happened due to the aims of the course contents and teacher's clarification of how to pronounce words. Pronunciation is key to mutual intelligibility among different varieties of English. Pronunciation is seen as an important key in the meetings observed. Jenkins (as cited in Renandya & Widodo, 2016) pointed out the importance of pronunciation by saying that grammatical errors and inappropriate expressions can still be understood, but wrong pronunciation leads to a failure conversation.

Next, "asking instructional questions" is revealed as the second-highest categories of teacher talk occurred. Asking instructional questions was the context of teachers' language referred to asking questions about things related to the teaching materials and it took 8.10% of the percentages. To give clearer descriptions of this category, the table below is provided.

TABLE III. ASKING INSTRUCTIONAL QUESTIONS

	P	Data	Code
26	T	**What we have learned in the last meeting?**	16
27	Ss	(paying attention)	26
28	T	***Kita belajar apa?***	16
29	Ss	Spelling	22
30	T	Yeah… We have learned about spelling.	8
31	Ss	(paying attention)	26
32	T	**Do you still remember?**	16
33	Ss	……………. (mumbling)	33
34	T	**Yes?** *Masih inget?*	16

Table III shows the category of teacher talk in asking the context of the instructional question. The questions relate to students' understanding of the material from the previous meeting and it is shown that the question was repeated four times. The repetition indicates the teacher's effort in prompting the students to remember the material given in the previous meeting. These kinds of questions are low-press questions and they were asked several times in each meeting observed. Another example of "asking instructional questions" categorized as low-press questions can be seen in the excerpt follows.

Questioning is used in order to stimulate the students to stimulate their thoughts (Brown, 2000). This category is distinguished not only by the exclamation mark but also when the teacher is waiting for students' responses which indicates that the teacher is giving a question. However, when the teacher is asking a continuous question in order to stimulate students to produce a correct answer, this is not considered a question but a prompting.

The next one is giving an explanation. This aspect of teacher talk took 5.54% of the percentages. Giving explanation refers to the teacher gives detail information about context related to teaching materials such as, how to pronounce vocabularies, what is…? How does…? Why is…? Teacher used this category in the ways of explaining who and how, she took more time to explain how to pronounce vocabularies related to family members by giving knowledge directly, through correction, or by delaying it with questions. For example:

TABLE IV. GIVING EXPLANATION

	P	Data	Code
341	T	*Baik. Sekarang kita balik lagi ke pembelajaran tentang angka ya. Kita kembali lagi ke pembelajaran tentang angka. Kemarin yang kita pelajari dari* **one, two, three, four, five, seven, eight, nine and ten** *dan seterusnya,* (Now, we will talk about numbers again. Yesterday, we have learned number from one to ten*)*	9
342	T	*Pakai th gak dibelakangnya?* (Did we use th behind the numbers?)	16
343	Ss	*Enggak!* (No)	22
344	T	**Sedangkan ini, ketika menyebutkan tanggal kenapa ada th nya? Mungkin kalian bertanya-tanya seperti itu ya. (While in this chapter, we use th to mention the date. You may wonder "why does it use th?")** *Nah sekarang miss akan ulangi lagi dari number. Ternyata numbers itu, dalam bahasa inggris dibagi menjadi dua macam.* (Now, I will go back to the numbers. Actually numbers are divided into two types)	9
345	Ss	[Paying attention]	26
346	T	*Ada yang disebut dengan cardinal* (There are cardinal numbers) *lah miss naon ieu? Meuni jadi lieur* (Ow, mam why is this getting difficult?) *Ada yang juga disebut dengan* (Also, there are numbers named)	9 15
347	Ss	Ordinal	25
348	T	Ordinal	8
349	T	*Di Matematika mungkin sudah belajar ya* (Did you learned it on Math?)	18
350	S24	*Iya*	28
351	T	**Nah. Kardinal itu yang kemarin, yang** **one two three** (So, cardinal numbers are the number we learned yesterday, one two three)	9

In Table IV, the teacher tried to deliver the content by lecturing, asking questions and giving clarification to students' ideas. The teacher started the explanation by making a recall of what the students have learned and tried to relate students' understanding of the material that will be given. The teacher used an effective explanation by giving examples relevant to the students' experience and level of knowledge, as explaining is an attempt to provide an understanding of a problem to others, the teacher should make it simple.

Next, there is giving instruction that took 5.13 % of the percentages. Giving instruction was the language used by the teacher is asking the students to do or not to do something soon or now. The high amount of giving instruction used is due to instructions to the students to imitate what the teacher had said, in this case, imitating vocabularies imitated by the teacher. The instructions to imitate the pronunciation of vocabularies right after the teacher can be seen in Table V.

TABLE V. GIVING INSTRUCTION TO IMITATE PRONUNCIATION

	P	Data	Code
136	T	*Sekarang disini miss punya flashcards.* (I have flashcards here) *Disini nama-nama anggota* keluarga (There are members of family written on it) *Kartu yang pertama*(The first card is…) [showing the cards]	9
137	Ss	Father /ˈfɑthə r / [pronunciation mistake]	21
138	T	OK	8
139	**T**	**Repeat after me.**	**3**
140	T	Father. /ˈfɑːðə r /	9
141	Ss	Father /ˈfɑːðə r /	29
142	T	OK	8

Table V shows that the teacher used students' ideas but clarify it in a more academic pronunciation, then she asked the students to imitate her right after she pronounced the word "father".

B. *Teacher talk in encouraging students' participation*

The findings of this study are also aimed to reveal how the teacher talk encourages students' participation. From the data analyzed, it is found that the teacher encouraged students' participation by giving initiation to the students. Initiation is the move in a teaching exchange that initiates an interaction; teachers will usually adopt the way of asking questions, invitation, and giving directions (Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010). In the data analyzed, the teacher used some initiation in facilitating opportunities for the students to participate in classroom interaction and activities.

Initiation provides opportunities for the learner to take action as responses to the teacher. The responses were categorized as students' participation. There are 13 types of students' participation encouraged by teacher talk and they will be explained in the paragraphs follow.

As the teacher made a lot of initiation which facilitate students' participation and involvement and construct potential for learning, thus, the first type of student participation that found to be encouraged the most was "participation in class discussion". Participation in class discussion referred to the actions of the students participate in the course content actively and pro-actively by giving ideas related to the content that is talked about. Participation in the class discussion took 9.88 % of the percentages. Students were highly encouraged to participate in class discussion since the teacher made many opportunities for the students to freely giving ideas in classroom activities.

The opportunities made by the teacher to make students participate in the class discussion occurred in various types of activities. The first was by recalling students' memories of what they have learned. Recalling students' memories is believed can trigger students' participation as it is useful in

testing learning and focusing attention (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, & Wyse, 2010). The occurrence of students' participation in a class discussion can be seen in the table follows (coded by 25).

TABLE VI.   STUDENTS PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DISCUSSION

	P	Data	Code
40	T	And do you still remember the members of the family? What are they? *Masih ingat?* (Do you remember?)	16
41	S4	Yes….	28
42	T	What are they?	16
43	S3	(mumbling)	28
44	T	Yes? What are they?	10
45		*Apa saja?* C'mon… (What are they? Come on)	
46	**S4**	**Mother /ˈmʌðə r /**	**28**
47	T	Mother /ˈmʌðə r /	8
48	Ss	Father /ˈfɑːðə r/	25
49	T	Father /ˈfɑːðə r/	8
50	S14	Grandmother /ˈgrændˌmʌðə r /	25
51	T	Grandmother /ˈgrændˌmʌðə r /	8
52	S10	Grandfather /ˈgrændˌfɑːðə r /	25
53	S1	Father /ˈfɑːðə r/	25
54	S6	Grandfather /ˈgrændˌfɑːðə r /	25
55	T	Terus?	10
56	S4	Grandfather /ˈgrændˌfɑːðə r /	25
57	S3	Grandmother /ˈgrændˌmʌðə r /	25
58	S19	Uncle /ˈʌŋkl/	25
59	Ss	Uncle /ˈʌŋkl/	25
60	T	Ya	8

Table VI shows a situation where the teacher asked a question related to the previous meeting after one student volunteered to answer the questions, the class started to join the discussion by providing another answer. This answer coded as participating class discussion because the teacher did not ask any question but only gave correction after one question as a lead was answered. Brown (2000) stated that the teacher's question could provide an initiation to a series of students' responses. One question may be all the teachers need in starting a discussion in the classroom.

The second type of student participation that encouraged the most was "answering questions when called on". Answering questions occurred in high percentages due to a lot of teacher's questioning in asking instructional questions and asking management questions. Answering questions also occurred in a voluntary type where the teacher asked the students without calling one's name and one student volunteered to answer the question simply by giving the answer or sometimes raising their hands first. By asking questions, teacher-developed students' thinking process and make them express ideas in their mind (Aisyah, 2014).

TABLE VII.   STUDENTS ANSWERED THE TEACHER'S QUESTIONS

236	T	*Apa itu* wake up? (What is wake up in Bahasa Indonesia?)	16
237	**S34, S31, S6, S30**	***Bangun tidur*** [wake up]	**28**
238	T	What time do you wake up every day? [pointing at S31]	16
239	**S31**	**Em, six.**	**22**
240	T	At six?	16
241	**S31**	**(noding)**	**22**
242	T	*Gak kesiangan?* (Isn't it late?)	17
243	**S31**	**Enggak [shaking head]** (No)	**22**
245	T	OK. At six.	8
246	Ss	(Paying attention)	26

28: Volunteered to answer questions
22: Answering when called on

The high percentages of answering questions when called on and volunteering to answer questions occurred as questioning is a potent way to take up and extend students' idea (Connors & Robertson, 2017). Questions can be either "high press" or "low press." High-press questions tend to be open-ended which requires students to think more deeply and support open speculation. While low-press questions require more literal information or the range of options has been narrowed to enable students to answer. Both types of questions are useful. However, in the meetings observed, it is found that the questions asked by the teacher mostly occurred in low-press authentic where students' answers had been led to a certain focus and they are predicted (see Table VII).

Table VII captures a situation where the teacher asked her students the time of their daily activities. After she asked the meaning of wake-up in L1, the teacher asked one student about the usual time when he wakes up. Despite the short duration, it shows a complete example of students participated actively when the questions were related to personal experiences.

The questions asked in the meetings observed are also mostly related to students' personal experiences, opinions, and attitudes where students are allowed to join in regardless of their skill.

The next type of students' participation found to be encouraged most was offering ideas spontaneously. Offering ideas spontaneously refer to students speaking spontaneously without being called by the teacher and sometimes without any initiation from the teacher and it took 6.97 % of the percentages.

TABLE VIII.   STUDENTS OFFERED IDEAS SPONTANEOUSLY

	P	Data	Code
720	T	*Nah, sekarang kita lihat disini.* (Now, look at this line) *Kakek dan nenek menikah.* (Grandfather and grandmother are married) *Mereka mempunyai anak yaitu* (They have some children, they are,)	9
721	Ss	(paying attention)	26
722	S16	Cucu (grandchild)	21
723	S13	Father /ˈfɑːðə r /	21
724	Ss	Mother /ˈmʌðə r /	21
725	S31	Father /ˈfɑːðə r /	21
726	T	Father /ˈfɑːðə r /, mother…. /ˈmʌðə r / and uncle /ˈʌŋkl/ … yah.	8
727	Ss	(paying attention)	26
728	T	Father dan mother ˈfɑːðə r / and /ˈmʌðə r /	8
729	S33	*Nikah* (are married)	21

Table VIII shows students' participation in categories of offering ideas spontaneously. Students were expressing their thought along with the explanation from the teacher. The utterances were initiated by the teacher's explanation. Students spoke up what popped in their minds while listening and paying attention to what was being said by the teacher. It is shown that almost all the students are likely to offer their ideas spontaneously without having to be pointed by the teacher, some students offered their ideas continuously in every occasion and in every time they think that they are allowed to. These findings are in line with Cameron (2002) statement of young learners' criteria in learning a language; that young learners have a lack of inhabitation that prevents them from saying or doing what they want.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study found that teacher talk contributed to increasing students' participation, and students indicated a positive perception and attitude toward the teacher talk and their performances. The teacher used initiation in giving correction, asking questions, giving instruction and encouragement. Organizing teacher talk in instructional talk provide the students opportunities to give responses relate to the teaching material, and teacher talk in management talk provide students the opportunities to do activities in classroom or work on

exercises in a disciplined way, it also enabled them to take responsibility for their own time in completing the activities or task given by the teacher. The result revealed that the students were highly encouraged to participate in every classroom activity. They were aware of their own capability, strengths and weaknesses and what to do in every situation. Their awareness helped them to participate when they should and needed to. They realized that students' participation is important and they were mindful of what they could get from being participated in classroom activities.

In relation to the findings of this study, the following recommendation is offered for EFL teachers and further research. EFL teachers are advisable to pay attention to the teacher talk aspect in questioning the students. High-press questions are suggested to use than low-press questions. High-press questions will challenge deep thinking for the students to giving the answer as a form of active participation. And student-centered learning is recommended in order to gain a higher level of students' participation. In addition, for those who are interested in conducting similar research, they are suggested to analyze the teacher talk in another framework as well as students' participation characteristics. This suggestion is in order to gain various series of data and to analyze whether the interaction occurs between teacher-students or students-students.

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