



# The Reason of Switching Formal and Informal Talk Between Male and Female English Teachers in Classroom Interaction

Dennisya Marwa<sup>(✉)</sup> and Hamzah Hamzah

English Department, FBS Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia  
dennisyamarwa39@gmail.com

**Abstract.** This research aimed to find out the reason of switching formal and informal talk, which male and female English teachers produced in classroom interaction. This research was descriptive research in which two male English teachers and two female English teachers taught three English Courses in Padang, particularly teachers who taught in the intermediate class. The researcher collected the data through observation and audio recording, which transcribed the whole classroom interaction. The researcher first categorized the formal and informal talk and then identified and analyzed the reason for switching from formal to informal talk or vice versa with related reasons, including participant, topic, setting, and function. The obtained finding found both teachers genders switched formal and informal talk. The reason completely appeared with male and female English teachers. Further, male English teachers showed 117 reasons which the percentage was 46.6% and female English teachers produced 251 reasons which indicated the percentage was 53.4%. The female English teachers frequently switched their talk in classroom interaction, which produced higher formal or informal talk than male English teachers. Thus, both genders of teachers implied the reasons for switching existed in classroom interaction to build a connection with the students, explain the material, and provide a joke.

**Keywords:** Reason of Switching · Formal Talk · Informal Talk · Classroom Interaction

## 1 Introduction

In the classroom, the teacher has a role in creating an atmosphere of the classroom full of exciting moments. It is to support the students to be active in the classroom. The teacher encourages the students through their talk to build the connection for students. [1] argued that teacher talk needs to control and manage the classroom by doing the activities based on the lesson plan. Teacher talk includes instruction and explanation, which interact with the students in the classroom. The teacher is the main in the teaching and learning process that delivers the ideas and materials for students [2]. It is a chance for the teacher to enhance the students' interaction. There is feedback during the teaching and learning process.

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I. Ifdil (Ed.): PSSHERS 2021, ASSEHR 690, pp. 474–481, 2023.

[https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-33-6\\_52](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-33-6_52)

While talking, the teacher simplifies what will be discussed to catch the students' attention. The aim of simplifying the talk is to frame students' understanding of what the teacher said in the classroom [3]. The teacher tries to utter the word familiar to the students and provides the new vocabulary as the additional vocabulary for students. The teacher produced various talks, which can be formal or informal talk. It seems various expressions that teachers utter in classroom interaction. Sometimes, the teacher does not realize in producing formal or informal talk as long as the students catch the point.

In the classroom, the teacher produces formal talk dominantly while providing explanations which are delivering the materials to the students then, informal talk utters in providing a joke or entertainment session. [1] showed that teachers delivered much to talk to manage the class running as planned. Furthermore, the gender of the teacher provides a different way of classroom interaction. In fact, female English teachers tend to be patient and talk more to build a relationship with the student. However, male English teachers want to make their talk simpler so the students will quickly understand.

The different characteristics of teaching between male and female English teachers in classroom interaction, each gender produced different talk, either formal or informal talk. [4] emphasized the male and female teachers show different behaviour in classroom interaction. The difference can be seen in the teaching-learning process in which male teachers go straight to the point while female teachers talk too much in connecting with the students. Therefore, the talk can appear differently between male and female English teachers which teachers show switching from formal to informal talk or vice versa.

The teachers switching their talk contained the reason why they switched their talk. The reason can be a joke, instruction, topic, or material. Genders of teachers do not consider switching the talk due to the natural talk that teachers produce in classroom interaction. The switching happens not only at school but also in English courses. The way of teachers in teaching shows different way, particularly in classroom interaction. In English courses, the teachers produce formal and informal talk differently even the teachers in the intermediate class prefer to talk in English to encourage the student to talk in English as well. Thus, the reason of switching exists between male and female English teachers in classroom interaction as long as the teachers talk any kind of formal or informal talk. Based on the phenomena above, the researcher interested in investigating the reason of switching formal and informal talk that happened in the intermediate class in the English course which is in Padang.

## **2 Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1 Teacher Talk**

#### **2.1.1 Formal Talk**

[3, 5] implied the same concern of formal talk which is rules and attention more in structure, diction, and pronunciation. However, [6] argued that formal talk is related to the norm behaviour. It means the acceptance of language by using proper rules and consideration in talking with others. The vocabulary that is produced should relate to the context of the talk to provide feedback or respond from someone else. The formal talk is strict of talk and less of flexibility which needs to consider the rules and words that can be

uttered. Teachers produce formal talk to avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding [7]. Vivid information is needed for the students therefore teacher provides formal talk without misunderstanding.

Therefore, formal talk is a kind of language that considers the pattern, word, pronunciation, no slang, and no abbreviation that indicates the classroom interaction without misinterpretation and misunderstanding. The knowledge of the teacher while produced formal talk is a key of classroom interaction with the students. It is because the flexibility of talk is down which, teachers need to think the structure and word that they wants to deliver for the students during classroom interaction.

### **2.1.2 Informal Talk**

Informal talk is the opposite of formal talk which there is no particular pattern or word. It is the difference informal talk with formal talk. [8, 9] described the informal talk as more minor form and rule of language, which can be short sentences, slang, or abbreviation while talking. In the classroom interaction, it builds an interactive class without a monotonous atmosphere. The teachers do not need to consider any form or rule but talk as much as they can during classroom interaction as long as the students understand what is said. [7] also said that informal talk is less, short and less precise in grammatical structure. The flexibility of informal talk exists in classroom interaction in which the teachers share their opinion with the students.

In short, informal talk defines the flexibility of language used that less of form, word, and complexity rules. The teachers can produce short-term or slang to make their talk simple. It impacts the atmosphere of the class that the atmosphere is more interactive and fun without monotonous situations.

## **2.2 Reason of Switching Formal and Informal Talk**

The teachers switch the talk spontaneously even they do not realize switching the talk. Teachers switch their talk due to reason such as making a joke or entertaining for students to be active in the classroom while teaching and learning process. The reasons of switching can be seen in solidarity, topic choices, and purpose [10]. Solidary refers to the intimacy among interlocutors while interacting. Topic choices indicate the particular topic that wants to talk about or discuss. The purpose means the goals of the talk among interlocutors, which is expressing the ideas, feeling, or information to the others. Moreover, [11] have the same argument regarding which topic, speakers, and setting as causes of switching.

In addition, [12] stated that the reason why teachers switch their talk is four reasons which are participants, topic, setting, and function. Participant means the addressee or participants who involve in interaction. While interacting, the participants show their switching as the signal of a membership group, ethnicity, or solidarity with the addressee. The topic is related to the issue of discussion among interlocutors. The speakers may switch their talk to a particular topic that will be delivered to others. The setting is the location where the interlocutors take place, that can be school, home, or other places. The function is related to the purpose of talking that provides information or asks something.

There are two functions which are referential function and affective function. The referential function indicates conveying information in detail to others, whereas the affective function shows speakers' feelings for others, such as goodwill rather than the detailed information.

To sum up, the reason of switching exists in classroom interaction which is four reasons. They are participant, topic, setting, and function which these reasons emphasize the teachers are switching in classroom interaction even they do not realize when they switch their talk during in the classroom.

### **2.3 Gender and Language Used**

Gender and language education are the essential areas that should be discussed regarding which education will face gender, which is male and female. According to [13], three areas to see the gender and language education, whether second language or foreign language. First is the subject matter that contains what is taught or learned for a second or foreign language. It concerns grammar or nouns, which Ms is replaced miss to show a young female. The second is a process which is the whole process of teaching and learning in the classroom. It contains motivation, beliefs, strategies, cognitive processor performance, and achievement. The third is classroom material which delivers the topic that should be taught to students. It may be a handout, presentation, textbook, teachers' guide, grammar or dictionary book, test, and curricula.

It can be concluded that all areas are related to the educational context that teachers face at every meeting in the classroom. In the classroom, subject matter, process, and materials are connected. Still, it is different execution by gendered due to depending on the response of teachers, either male or female teacher while teaching in the classroom and building interaction and a good atmosphere among the students.

## **3 Methodology**

This research used descriptive research in which find out the reason of switching that male and female English produced in classroom interaction. The aim of this research was investigate the phenomena of the research to collect the information by participants' tendency responses [14]. The participants were two male and two female teachers in the intermediate class. There were three English courses which were Elia English Course, English School Indonesia, and Brainy Course. Observation and audio recording was the way of collecting the data. For analyzing the data, the researcher transcribed the whole classroom interaction, categorized formal and informal talk, and identified the reason of switching formal and formal talk between male and female English teachers in classroom interaction.

## **4 Finding and Discussion**

### **4.1 Findings**

All teachers commonly switched their talk in classroom interaction. There were four reasons of switching of formal and informal talk in which participant, topic, setting, and function. The four reasons of switching is categorized by [12]. It is concluded in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Reason of switching formal and Informal talk between male and female English teachers

Gender	Reason of Switching	F	%
Male English teachers	Participant	30	12,0
	Topic	1	0,4
	Setting	57	22,7
	Function	29	11,6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>46,6</b>
Female English Teachers	Participant	39	15,5
	Topic	2	0,8
	Setting	69	27,5
	Function	24	9,6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>53,4</b>
<b>Total General</b>		<b>251</b>	<b>100</b>

## 4.2 Discussion

Regarding of reasons of switching, the findings in this study indicate four reasons of switching of formal and informal talk. The reasons were in line with [12] which participant, topic, setting, and function. The findings showed that male and female English teachers switch their talk in classroom interaction. The reason teachers switched their talk during the teaching and learning process occurred in the classroom. [10] also stated that reasons of switching which include solidarity, topic, and purposes. It emphasizes the same reason, which indicates the solidary refers to participant and purposes implies the function that can be information or emotion. The solidary is engagement between teacher and students in classroom interaction. It is a way for teachers to connect with them as well.

Switching formal to informal talk or vice versa happened in the classroom, particularly in making entertainment or joke. The teachers switch the talk from formal to informal to boost the students' enthusiasm in classroom interaction. The opinion by [15] stated that the switching happens when the teachers do movement or transition of talk. The transition seems to the talk that different used in the same interaction. Furthermore, the switching is used to move the talk, which happens in informal talk containing familiar words to catch the attention of listener [16]. The familiar words enhance confidence in the teacher, and the students are curious about what the teacher said.

The finding showed that female English teachers were higher than male English teachers. It indicated female English teachers prefer to talk more to engage the student in the classroom which was 53.4%. In line with [17] female English teachers try to connect with the students by talking which tell about the story or experience. Female English teachers need to build a connection with the students to know their character of the students. It aims to threaten the students well because every student has different characters and ways of talking to them. However, male English teachers were not talking more as the same as female English teachers, around 47.7%. It is due to the male English

teachers tending to talk facts or detailed information related to classroom management. The statement is supported by [18] male English teachers showing the logical information to deliver the idea or the factual information to the students without talking more and avoiding sharing personal information.

The first reason was participants concerned about the intimacy and solidarity between teacher and students in classroom interaction. Commonly, nicknames were produced by teachers to engage involved in classroom interaction. It provided the respect of teachers to the students to know their nicknames. "Next is you, Novia" (male English teacher). It also emphasized the teacher knows well about the students during the teaching and learning process. The students became motivated to involve in classroom interaction. The female English teachers also called their students by calling their nicknames. "Number 3, Felice". The intimacy between teacher and students in classroom interaction will close each other by calling the handle. The second is topic related to the lecturing process or explaining the materials. The switching happened when the teachers started the lesson by explaining the materials. "We discuss about present continuous, past tense, and present perfect". It happened when the teacher produced informal talk for the first time and next to formal talk, which identified the reason of switching was topic due to discussing the materials. The female English teachers also switched their informal to formal talk that aimed to explain the materials. "We would like to continue our lesson about lexical chunks". The teacher described the materials simply by explaining them briefly.

Furthermore, the third reason was setting that related to the atmosphere in classroom interaction. It can be a command to do activities or a game while teaching and learning. The male English teachers switched the talk through question and answer sessions for students. "What does it mean?". Setting included question and answer sessions in classroom interaction. The female English teachers also showed setting as the reason for switching, which maintains a fun classroom atmosphere. "Do you remember what we learned in the previous meeting?". The teacher asked a question to the student in classroom interaction while still lecturing. The last reason was function, including referential and affective function. The referential function concerned the information that was shared to the students. "I think we discuss right now". The teachers switched to sharing the information, which showed what to do to the next activity in the classroom. Affective function expressed the feeling of the teachers. The teachers switched their talk to demonstrate the affective function of giving students appraisals. "Nice". The teacher uttered their sense to show the students' achievement in answering the question.

Overall, All teachers showed participants as the reason of switching due to intimacy with their students. [11] explained that intimacy implies the relationship between teacher and students to the students enjoy in the classroom. Both genders teachers prefer to call the nicknames of the students to address their connection with them. The topic is the second reason that teachers switched the talk from informal to formal talk due to the topic of discussion in which teachers explained the lesson to their students. Setting was dominantly reasoned because of switching that lecturing process. It can be a question and answer, instructions, games, or commands for the students as long as teaching and learning process. It is supported by [19] setting related to the background of the classroom, which is the teaching process or others. The last reason is the function which the teacher produced function reasons in switching formal and informal talk. It showed

two functions which were referential and affective. Referential function means delivering information, including message-oriented, that teachers should deliver to the students efficiently [20]. Affective function concerns expressing feelings, and teachers present the appraisal of what is doing great by the students.

## 5 Conclusion

The reason of switching happened in classroom interaction which the teachers overlooked when the switching existed. The teachers switched the talk to provide a transition in talking in the classroom interaction. The transition can be instruction, explanation of the materials, or creating a joke for the students. Four reasons of switching were participant, topic, setting, and function was related to both genders teachers. The most existed reason was setting either male or female English teachers produced that reason due to the switch the talk from formal to informal to indicated instruction or having a game or joke, however, when teachers produced from informal to formal which meant explanation the materials or lecturing process in the classroom. Thus, either male and female English teachers showed four reasons of switching which female English teachers was frequently switch their talk than male English teachers.

**Acknowledgments.** This research article was conducted in three English courses in Padang, especially Elia English Course, English School Indonesia, and Brainy Course. The researcher was thankful to all teachers who were pleased to observe the classroom interaction. Thus, the researcher obtained the data. Thank you to my advisor for providing valuable advice in conducting this research.

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