

A Brief Analysis on the Interpersonal Metafunction of English Teacher Talk in Classes

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Abstract—Teacher talk, as a important factor of second language acquisition, play an important role in the control of the university English classes and students' learning effect; quantity and quality of teachers' talk will influence or even determine the success of class. Teacher talk reflects the features and functions as the mean and tool of organizing, managing, arranging, and directing second language classes. Functional grammar has 3 purely theoretical functions: experiential metafunction, interpersonal metafunction, and textual metafunction. This paper analyses teacher talk in the classroom context from the angle of interpersonal metafunction and makes a research on the quantity of teacher talk and interactive adjustment of teachers and students and the forms of teachers' reflection on students' involvement by describing and explaining the structure of teacher talk. The study on interpersonal metafunction in systemic-functional linguistics has expanded the framework of interpersonal metafunction beyond sentence and achieved the interpersonal meanings by cognitive, estimative and interactive semantic means, which emphasizes that teachers talk can become important resources for expressing impersonal meanings.

Keywords- teachers' intercourse class; interaction interpersonal; metafunction

I. INTRODUCTION

In college English classes, teachers' good class talk not only can improve teachers' affinity and the degree of being approved, but also can optimize the environment of English class and improve efficiency of second language acquisition. Interpersonal metafunction theory was one of three purely theoretical functions proposed by systemic-functional linguist Halliday. In his systemic-functional grammar, interpersonal metafunction means people use languages to get associated with others, build and keep interpersonal relationships; at the same time they use languages to influence others, express their views on the world(including real world and inner world) and even change the world. Language has two basic functions: giving and demanding. Teacher talk is an important resource of English learners' language input, as well as an important means of organizing, managing, and directing second language classes. The means of teachers organizing and managing classes largely influence the activity of learners attending classes; in return, the quality of learners' attending class activities(including listening, answering questions, discussion, and quantity of knowledge mastered) largely determine the success of second language learning..

II. QUANTITY OF ENGLISH TEACHER TALK

Talk is one the most commonly used teaching methods for English teachers to organize classes, but the quantity and quality of talk are largely influenced by class types and teachers' character and environment. By doing researches, many scholars find that in teacher-centered classes, teacher talk amounts for 73% of the classroom(Pica & Long1986; Zhao Xiaohong,1998 ; Zhou Xing, Zhou Yun,2006), and they conclude that it lacks real communication; thus, learners get little understandable language input, which is not conducive to language acquisition. Teachers still dominate the teaching activities of the whole class. That teachers can raise questions at classes to fully show their domination, but it doesn't mean that teachers can replace all teaching activities. In fact, there are truly some class types and teachers that still follow one-way teaching method and lack necessary communication, which leads to cramming teaching method of language classes and the negligence of students' domination.

Teachers in classroom discourse successful learner outputs plays a big role. Steven Walsh held in 1999 in the 33rd annual meeting of the International Association of Teachers of English, made a presentation entitled "Asking the right question: Teacher talk and learner output" speech. He believes that foreign language teaching and other classroom biggest difference is: the purpose of learning both languages, but also the teaching medium. Nunan pointed out that the organization classroom teacher talk and learner acquisition process plays a vital role. Krashen that comprehensible language input is an important condition for second language acquisition. Johnson pointed out that teachers mainly through the language they use to control the classroom happened. Hakansson pointed out that the quantity and quality of teacher talk will influence and even determine the success or failure of classroom teaching.

Chinese education experts have repeatedly asked for "student-centered" teaching thinking. In the traditional "teacher-centered" classroom second language acquisition, learners get less comprehensible language input which is not conducive to language acquisition. British pioneer in the study of applied linguistics Corder said: "Effective language teaching should not be contrary to the natural process, but should adapt to the natural process and should not hinder learning. We should contribute to learning and learning does not enable students to adapt to teachers and teaching materials , but should

allow teachers and students to adapt teaching materials. "teacher talk in addition to teaching students knowledge of the language, it should also apply to guide and organize students to actively participate in communicative language to learn knowledge, let students use the language they are learning.

Language is a process, and asked - A is a positive way of communicating. Therefore, teachers in the teaching practice should be familiar with questioning techniques, giving full play the role of teacher talk. Brock suggested reference should train teachers to increase the number of problems, which can contribute to provide students with longer sentences, syntax is more complicated answer, thus promoting language acquisition. Steven Walsh Recommendation: Teachers should recognize teachers' discourse on the importance of classroom communication, closed questions and answers should be used sparingly. Asked later to increase teachers 'wait time', give students enough time to think. When students could not answer questions, teachers should not substitute its expression of ideas, and questions should change the way students communicate to proceed. Even if a student answered incorrectly, they should provide students with a positive feedback, which can enhance students' self-confidence, to help students improve learning interest.

People only get comprehensible input information to foreign language acquisition. Comprehensible input information, a formula is "i +1". Where, "i" indicates the current level language learners, "1" higher than the current level of knowledge of the language learner. If a large number of learners in the acquisition process of contacting "i +1", the learner will understand the information in the same time, unconsciously learned a new language knowledge. According to this theory, the teacher talk should be slightly higher than the existing language proficiency of students, so that students as possible to get the teacher talk comprehensible input. In Second Language Acquisition classroom, learners enter the main source of teacher talk, which requires teachers to enhance learning, and continuously improve their speaking skills. Also, a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the actual situation of students, teachers choose the right words.

A good teacher will try to extend the students' discourse time, and minimize teacher talk time. Most successful language classes depend on teacher-centered class activities; in contrast, those that put over-reliance on students' independent learning are among the most unsuccessful classes. It is not easy to find out the reasons: two conditions are required for low level second language students to achieve independent learning at classes: one is that they must be sociable enough to guarantee their communication with the teacher and high level students; the other one is that there must be enough high level students who are willing to communicate with them. For the second language classes of most China's general universities and colleges, it is very hard to meet them both. When there few students who can speak fluent English, it has no significant promotion effects to encourage students' discussion (Wong-Fillmore, 1985; 25). It may produce the opposite of the desired result if the teacher puts over-reliance on students' mutual communication (such as pair work, group discussion) in these classes. Therefore, we should not excessively pursue students participation in form and lessen teacher talk China's college

English classes, but adopt relevant policies according to learner' group and individual differences.

III. RAISING QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH CLASSES

The analysis of teacher talk in classes, as an important apart of talk analysis, has been of great concern to scholars at home and abroad. Teachers' raising questions, as a necessary part of class, has the following functions: arising students' interest, encouraging their participation in class activities, examining their mastery of knowledge, evaluating teaching effects and cultivating students' thinking and communicative ability. Questions raised at classes can be divided into two types: referential questions and display questions. Referential questions refer to those that do not have certain answers, and want students can express their views freely when they answer them; display questions refer to those that ask students to answer the certain answers.

English teachers and the teaching process is the process of bilateral activities, requiring teachers and students in the classroom tandem with one another to complete communicative activities and teaching process. Reasonable question is teachers guide students to think, students cognitive ability, analytical ability and innovation ability important means. Classroom Questioning is one of the means of heuristic teaching. Such teaching methods to students studying the subject, through the design issues at different levels, and fully mobilize the enthusiasm of students to learn English, initiative and creativity. Question designed to decent, delicate, can introduce students to problem situations that can inspire students to understand the course content, check the condition students to acquire knowledge, to stimulate students desire for knowledge; enable students to maximize access to information, activate students' thinking, mobilize students enthusiasm; better able to develop the ability of students to improve the effectiveness of classroom teaching.

According to the Longman Dictionary of American English, "function" means "a general purpose or a special duty". A good teacher should exactly know his or her teaching purposes; the purposes of every class, every class activity and even every question raised. Teaching with purposed will be more meaningful and effective. Some scholars (Zhao Xiaohong, 1998; Zhou Xing, and Zhou Yun, 2002) hold that more referential questions and less display questions should be raised at college English classes, because referential questions can increase learners' language output at classes, which is conducive to language acquisition. Different questions have different meanings and emotions that influence the communication between teachers and students. The survey results show that wh-type questions and simplified questions are most commonly used questions, followed by yes-no questions, and the selective questions are used the least. This result reflects teachers' domination at classes and the difficulty of raising questions. Teachers do not have to wait too long to continue their class activities when they raise display questions, which can also avoid students' being distracted. In a word, display questions and referential questions all have their own merits and emphases; teacher should use them flexibly according to class practice and avoid attending to one and losing the other one. The principles and techniques of asking questions for teachers:

1. Design specific questions. Teachers' questioning is to mobilize students to actively thinking with inspiring role. Teachers asked to be thought about in advance, there is a purpose to ask, you can not just ask the question, or the problem is not too difficult is tasteless, fail to ask the purpose of the classroom atmosphere is not satisfactory.

2. Questions should be able to arouse students' interest in learning. Classroom teachers questions, most students must want to solve the problem is an urgent need to address the problem of students.

3. Questions should fit students' ability in learning. Appropriate questions can enhance students' understanding of the issues, and their ability to reduce anxiety. At different levels of classes, we should use a natural, simple plain language to represent problem, adjust the vocabulary and sentence structure in order to meet the student's language and conceptual level. Students who have difficulty in answering, to reduce the difficulty and give tips.

4. Questions should try to reflect the real communication. Some questions have real-life situation that is the question, for example: if it is hot today, the teacher can ask: Are you feeling hot? Shall we open the window? If people are absent the class, the teacher can ask: Who is absent today? Such authenticity problem is more than the non-authenticity effective ones. Some problems should be avoided in the past phenomenon: Teacher held a book, and asked: Is this a book? Such non-authenticity question is purely rhetorical, totally incompatible with the communicative language teaching.

Questions in the classroom has a pivotal role, it inspires all students quickly into the thinking process, proactive thinking, the development of innovation capacity is essential. Good question, is good at figuring out difficult problems for students to understand and grasp the article subject, context and the author's intention to seize the key points, not to speak English, the camera induction. Meanwhile, the teachers' classroom teaching skills is also a question, "Education is not fixed, your in successfully implemented." Classroom questions, too, the key is based on the actual teaching, combined with teaching content, considering the interest of students, designed carefully; in the "good question "" clever ask ", we must also be good guide doubt, doubts, the only way to induce students 'motivation for learning, teaching functions into full play questions, and ultimately promote the development of students' thinking and teaching quality.

IV. INTERACTIVE ADJUSTMENT OF ENGLISH CLASSES

Class Teaching is a communicative process of interpersonal function (A Ilwright 1984; E llis1990). Many famous western linguists (A Ilwright 1984, 1991; Brown 2001; Seliger 1983) put out that classroom interaction is conducive to language acquisition. Teachers usually dominate and lead the classroom interaction for their second language level is higher than students', and students are in a passive and subordinate status. To check students understanding or raise the request of elaborating, teachers often lighten students' burden by repeating students' talk, such as "You mean...,right?" "What do you mean by saying. . .?" Students often use "I am sorry, pardon" and "Excuse me" to ask teachers to repeat.

College English teachers' classroom feedback, which plays an important role in class teaching, is a part of students'

understandable input and also can promote students' language output. The types of college English teachers' feedback differentiate from each other larges. Various types of feedback talk will contribute to building the equal and harmonious class atmosphere and encourage students' participation, which can create more opportunities for students to learn and use target language.

V. THE FEEDBACK IN ENGLISH CLASSES

American psychologist D. Hshunk (1982) study pointed out that "if you want to maintain high student achievement motivation, it is necessary to give feedback on their efforts and told them efforts to obtain the corresponding results so that they continue to feel that their efforts are effective." Psychologist Zeer Le (ZeUer) memory tests on two groups of college students and give feedback experiment also shows that different: a pleasant and warm emotions, can make a person's brain activity in the best condition. People learn in a pleasant mood. Concentrating, memory effect. Such as pain, irritability, mood to learn, distractibility. Juan memory effect will be worse.

Teacher feedback is one of the most important aspects of teacher talk in English classrooms. It plays an important role in promoting students' second language learning and enhancing the quality of teacher talk.

This paper investigates and analyzes how the teachers provided feedback to student responses in university-level English-major classrooms. Based on the findings, some principles have been proposed in order to help language teachers improve upon their use of feedback. Another interpersonal function of teacher talk is to make feedback on students' classroom performance. Teachers' classroom feedback, as an important part of class activity, is an interpersonal function evaluation on students' classroom performance and has a significant influence on students' learning. Teachers can get effective class feedback in three kinds of talk: encouraging talk, corrective talk, and situational talk. Feedback can be aimed on the contents or forms of students' talk. Some studies suggest that for improving learners' behavior, positive feedback is more effective than negative feedback (Nunan, 1991; Zhao Xiaohong, 1998). Many researchers have already started to notice the importance of positive feedback from teachers and learners the importance of relationships. Wiener, founder of cybernetics (Wiener) that: an effective behavior must be some kind of feedback process to obtain information, to understand the purpose has been achieved (1). As teachers teaching process controller, it must be grasped through instructional feedback, regulate the teaching process, to promote teaching just right to fit the students' learning, so that students seek knowledge curiosity and desire to be able to set up their own scenarios are excited out in accordance with the objectives and requirements to successfully form a student mindset and thinking activities, thus showing a teacher-led regulation, student self-exploration as the main interaction, the dialectical development of teaching and learning in the best condition. Therefore, positive feedback has been considered to be the cheapest. The most useful and effective, but also the most easily overlooked method. In college English class. Teachers' positive feedback and communication to promote language acquisition. To improve the students provide a positive

emotional state, have an affinity for language learning environment.

The author of this paper investigates his class, and finds that most students expect positive feedback and only a few students want their mistakes to be pointed out on the spot. Chaudmn's (1988) study shows that the mistakes pointed out most by teachers are contents mistakes, followed by vocabulary mistakes, grammar mistakes, and pronunciation mistakes. However, the way teachers point out students' mistakes is not strict. They don't point out the mistakes directly or the reasons, but simply repeat students' words in the right way, which is fully consistent with the author's observation.

In order to establish a more harmonious relationship between teachers, in teaching should be appropriate to note the following: teachers must change the traditional teaching concepts, using reasonable correction way through due recognition stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning. From the survey results, the majority of students do not want teachers in public correction, in part because of public correction acts as a sort of punishment derogatory role of evaluation. Improper handling can affect the teachers and students, and dampen the enthusiasm of students learning English. Educational psychology that teacher affects learners' affective strengthen or weaken an important factor. Optimistic, energetic, knowledgeable teachers be learners mood and positive impact on classroom atmosphere. Using Positive feedback is recognized as an external motivation is to strengthen the impact of the most effective method. Linguists Vigil and Oiler (1976) proposed the interaction said that in the course of exchange between the speaker and the hearer contain two feedback ways: one is "emotional" feedback. Another is "cognitive" feedback. Proven that the best way for the positive feedback "emotional" and negative feedback "cognitive" feedback 191. Therefore. Teachers in correcting student learning error. Can effectively combine the two, on the one hand from the emotional exchange student agrees the current language, but at the same time put a negative cognitive feedback information to the students. Bring it to consciousness and to correct errors in their own language. Targeted. English comprehensive capabilities to ensure that students gradually improve.

VI. CONCLUSION

College English teachers language, which is the professional oral language used by teachers when they are engaged in teaching activities, is the major means and media for disseminating knowledge and information plays a vital role in teaching. This paper makes a research on college English teachers' talk from the angle of interpersonal function of language, and deeply discusses the issues that should be noted by teachers when they select class talk from the following aspects: quantity of teacher talk at classes, raising questions at English classes, the methods of communication between teachers and students, and class feedback. The author hopes this study can draw college English teachers' attention on class talk for raising questions and help them to raise questions effectively; besides, the author also hopes that raising question, the most commonly used talk form at classes, can play its due role in English teaching and achieve the goal of improving teaching quality.

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