



## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERACTION IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

### Techniques for Classroom Interaction

According to Interaction-Based Instruction, samples of the target language become available to the learner for interlanguage construction through classroom interaction. Through carefully designed classroom interaction activities, involving various forms of more or less realistic practice, learners can become skilled at actually doing the things they have been taught about. The problem is that the learners don't know instinctively how to interact with each other. This research presents a number of teaching techniques that addresses the problems that EFL teachers face to provide an interactive classroom condition. These techniques are the strategies of classroom interaction, such as questioning techniques and modification through cooperative method of learning. .

Keywords:

Questioning Technique; Interaction Hypothesis; Interaction-Based Instruction; Modification; Cooperative Learning

### 1. Introduction

The term classroom interaction refers to the interaction between teacher and learners in the classrooms. Classroom interaction research began in 1960s with the aim of evaluating the effectiveness of interaction in language acquisition. According to Brown (2001), interaction is at the heart of communicative competence. When a learner interacts with another learner he/she receives input and produces output. Nunan (1991) stated that language is acquired as learners actively engage and interact with each other to communicate in target language.

Social-interactionists see language as rule-governed cultural activity learned in interaction with others. According to Vygotsky (1978, as cited in Shannon, 2005), social-interaction plays an important role in the learning process. Ellis (2004) stated that "interactionists view language learning as an outcome of participating in discourse, in particular face-to-face interaction" (p. 78). Students don't know instinctively how to interact with each other. In addition, much training time is devoted to help teachers, arrange appropriate interactions between students and materials. How students should interact with one another is relatively ignored and is a neglected aspect of instruction. In this research, three basic ways are introduced to help learners to interact with each other appropriately. Some of the influential strategies in creating classroom interaction are as follows: For a new

English teacher, figuring out classroom interaction can be tricky. A language-learning classroom tends to run much differently from a typical lecture-style classroom. No matter what the age of the students be, consider the type of classroom interaction that would be most beneficial for the particular lesson you're teaching

Methods  
The type of classroom interaction you employ will largely depend on your own teaching philosophy and training. Some teachers stress the grammar-translation method and teach English through the students' native language. Other teachers use a more communicative method in which grammar constructions are not overtly explained or drilled. Community Language Learning (CLL) is another strategy for language teaching. A CLL teacher avoids lecturing and allows students to correct and learn from each other. Some teachers advocate "the Silent Way," a strategy where the teacher says as little as possible and the students are encouraged to "discover" the language on their own.



### Considerations

Most teachers do not strictly stick to one teaching method or strategy, but rather combine different aspects of several strategies to create effective classroom interaction. Students need input from a source who knows the target language, which is why "the Silent Way" is not a very effective teaching method. Students will not learn to produce a language without input and exposure, and both vocabulary and grammar are important tools for language learners.

In addition to exposure, students perform better when they have motivation to communicate. First and foremost, you should enforce an "English only" policy in the classroom. Beyond this, you can create motivation in the form of interactive games or activities where the students need to communicate in order to complete a task--also known as a "task-based" activity. An example of this type of activity is a "gap fill"; one student has the information that his partner needs to fill in the blanks.

### Types

There are different types of classroom interaction you can use to vary your lesson plan. Teacher-centered activity is when the teacher controls the group. This can consist of lecturing, explaining a new grammar concept on the board, having a whole-class discussion, choral drilling or asking individual students questions.

Alternatively, students can work individually, in pairs or in groups. You can even have the entire class working together on a project or game, with you as the teacher simply in the role of facilitator. At times you can assign a student to be in charge of running a game, and you can sit with the class and be a participant. Mixing up the types of classroom interaction used in your ESL class can help students stay attentive and interested.

### Questioning technique.

Where foreign language learners do not have a great number of tools for initiating and maintaining language, encouraging them to formulate or answer questions can provide stepping stones for continued interaction (Aliponga, 2003). The use of questioning strategy Outlined in this research is anchored in the Long's interaction hypothesis, which stresses the role of input in development of second language. The types of questions also affect the classroom interaction. For example, a study of Sutter (2001) showed that referential questions make more interaction between learners than display questions.

### Modification

This is widely used as negotiation of meaning. Negotiation of meaning has been defined by Pica (1994, as cited in Glew, 1998) as restructuring of interaction that occurs when a communication problem arises. Modification helps the learners to continue the interaction without interrupting it, and solve the miscommunication problem without using their mother language.

### Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is opposed to individualistic and competitive learning, which has been proclaimed as an effective instructional approach which involves the characteristics of learner-centered approaches. Cooperative learning requires learners to work in groups to achieve a common goal(Chafe, 1998). Working together maximizes opportunities for student-student interaction with meaningful input and output in a supportive environment. The present study is designed to promote interaction by using three mentioned strategies in an Iranian EFL context.



## Procedure

In order to apply interaction strategies in experimental group, these five phases were used in the instructional treatment. The first phase, dealt with creating small groups amongst the experimental group according to the principles of cooperative learning. Each small group included one weak learner, two average learners, and one strong learner, which is based on Anderson (1989). The strong or competent learners were selected as the leaders for groups. The leaders' English proficiency level was relatively higher than the others, comparing their scores to others according to pre-test scores. Consequently, the experimental group was divided into six groups, each with four members working together in jigsaw task for the purpose of this research. The second phase, concerned with the familiarizing the learners with the strategies of classroom interaction. The strategies of classroom interaction were explained to the learners clearly. They were told how to use the techniques.

Questioning technique and ask and answer the questions. The strategies of negotiation of meaning were explained to the learners, too. The learners were taught how they can ask for clarification, check the comprehension, and confirm and rephrase the utterance. The five essential elements of cooperation and the benefits of cooperation were explained to the learners. They were encouraged to interact with their group mates, discuss, and negotiate the learning material together. Knowledge of the language. knowing how to speak and use the language

1. Knowledge about the language. having the metalinguistic knowledge necessary to talk about the language
2. Knowledge of Pedagogy e. having the necessary skills to teach the language
3. Developing Online Language Teaching: Research-Based Pedagogies And Reflective Practices (New Language Learning And Teaching Environments)

## Focus

Before deciding on what type of classroom interaction you want to use for a particular lesson activity, think about whether the goal of the activity is fluency or accuracy. In fluency-oriented activities, you will want the students to be able to speak without much interruption. The point of fluency activities is to encourage the students to use as much language as they know in order to communicate fluidly without halting. The point of accuracy-oriented activities is the opposite. You want students to focus on a particular point, usually grammar or vocabulary, and focus on getting it right. In accuracy exercises, the flow is not as important as pronouncing or saying the target vocabulary or grammar correctly.

## Feedback

Another key part of classroom interaction is teacher feedback. In order to improve, students must get feedback and correction. During accuracy exercises, you may choose to correct students right away, while during fluency exercises you may want to simply listen and jot down any glaring mistakes. You can give feedback orally or in writing. Sometimes you may want to correct an individual student in front of other students, while at other times it is better to offer general suggestions and corrections for the entire group. When giving feedback, always bear in mind the cultural context, as some students may not be comfortable receiving individual correction in front of their peers.

There are several reasons why ELLs may struggle to respond appropriately to teachers' prompts and questions. Certainly, not all teacher questions are clearly understood by students,



and, if such is the case, teachers should rephrase or clarify queries in order to facilitate student comprehension.

model of second-language learning identified three motivational components that contribute to student progress: interest from the learners, proficient speakers who support and interact with the learners, and an environment that supports relationships between learners and proficient speakers. Students may not wish to participate if the teacher expects them simply to recite low-level knowledge or if the teacher sets low expectations for the students. Clarity, wait time, higher order thinking, and higher expectations are factors that influence the quality of teacher interactions with all students, but some factors pertain more specifically to the participation of ELLs.

While classroom discourse events vary, research has indicated that teacher talk dominates classroom communication. Edwards and Mercer (1987) documented that teachers perform 76% of classroom talk. Ramirez, Yuen, Ramey, and Merino (1986) categorized teacher talk as consisting of explanations, questions, commands, modeling, and feedback. Other studies of teacher discourse in primary grades indicated that teacher talk is often managerial rather than conversational in nature (e.g., Cummins, 1994). Forestal (1990) noted that 60% of teacher talk involved asking questions, primarily display questions, which expect students to recall information taught previously by the teacher. In one study of effective primary teachers of literacy, Mohr (1998) tallied the number of questions asked by the teachers in the study at almost 100 per hour. Therefore, the preponderance of teacher talk and the teacher's use of questions continue as factors in how much classroom talk time is shared with students; both the quantity and quality of such interactions deserve scrutiny. For example, there are differences between direct and indirect instruction; the nature of large-group discussion requires more guidance from the teacher than do small-group interactions (Johnston, 2004), and English-language learners may need different support in their communication efforts than do fluent English speakers. Thus, aspects of teacher-led discussions and discourse patterns warrant our continued attention.

## CONCLUSION

These guidelines can help teachers to become more exploratory in their interactions with students of varying language skills, intellectual levels, and dispositions. They can serve as a challenge, especially to persevere and novice teachers who can expect to have ELLs in their classrooms. New teachers may not readily anticipate the needs of their ELLs, although teacher education programs have put greater emphasis on meeting the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Still, the challenge to use ordinary words to accomplish extraordinary things remains. The Response Protocol is one way to support teachers' efforts to increase engagement among ELLs in classroom discourse.

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