

Evaluating Teachers' Interactional Competence in English Classroom through SETT Framework

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ABSTRACT

Teacher talk played a crucial role in English language learning, serving as the primary medium to manage classroom interactions, deliver content, and create learning opportunities. This study aimed to evaluate teacher talk in the English classroom at SMP N 1 Tayu using the Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework. The research focused on four modes of interaction: managerial mode, materials mode, skills systems mode, and classroom context mode. This study employed a qualitative approach involving three English teachers from grades 7, 8, and 9. Data were collected through classroom observations, teacher reflection sheets, semi-structured questionnaires, SETT tables, and semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using the SETT framework to identify teacher talk characteristics and interaction patterns. The results indicated that teacher talk varied across participants. Teacher 1 was dominated by the managerial mode (67%), followed by materials mode (19%), skills and systems mode (9%), and classroom context mode (5%). Teacher 2 was dominated by the materials mode (62%), followed by managerial mode (18%), classroom context mode (12%), and skills and systems mode (8%). Meanwhile, Teacher 3 showed a dominance of the materials mode (45%), followed by managerial mode (27%), classroom context

mode (21%), and skills and systems mode (7%). The findings revealed that teacher talk was closely related to the application of Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), the strategic use of translanguaging, and paralinguistic features to support student understanding across different interactional modes.

Keywords: teacher talk, Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT), Classroom Discourse Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Classroom interaction is widely recognized as a fundamental element in the process of English language acquisition. It is through interaction that students are exposed to the target language and are provided with opportunities to produce it. ^[1] Central to this interaction is teacher talk, which serves multiple functions: as a source of language input, a means of classroom management, and a tool for facilitating learning. However, the effectiveness of teacher talk is not determined by its quantity alone, but rather by the teacher's interactional competence the ability to use talk to create "space for learning." ^[2]

The Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework, developed by Walsh, provides a structured way for teachers to analyze their own talk in relation to pedagogical

goals. [3] This framework categorizes classroom interaction into four distinct modes: managerial mode, materials-oriented mode, skills-oriented mode, and classroom context mode. Each mode has its own interactional features and pedagogical aims. Understanding these modes allows teachers to align their language use with the specific learning objectives of each phase of the lesson. [4]

In the Indonesian junior high school context, particularly at SMP N 1 Tayu, English teachers face unique challenges in managing classroom interaction while ensuring students remain engaged and understand the instructions. While many studies have explored classroom interaction, there is still a need for more detailed evaluations of how teachers across different grade levels (7, 8, and 9) exhibit interactional competence through the SETT framework. [5]

This study aimed to evaluate the characteristics of teacher talk used by English teachers at SMP N 1 Tayu. By identifying the dominant modes and interaction patterns, this research sought to provide insights into how teacher talk can either facilitate or hinder students' learning opportunities. Furthermore, the study explored the relationship between teacher talk and Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), translanguaging strategies, and paralinguistic features used to support students' understanding.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to evaluate teacher talk and interactional competence through the Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework. The research was conducted at SMP N 1 Tayu, involving three English teachers who taught at different grade levels:

Teacher 1 (Grade 7), Teacher 2 (Grade 8), and Teacher 3 (Grade 9).

Data collection was carried out using multiple instruments to ensure triangulation and validity. The primary data source consisted of classroom observations and video recordings of the English lessons. To complement the observational data, a teacher reflection sheet, a semi-structured questionnaire, a specialized SETT table, and semi-structured interviews were utilized. The classroom interactions were transcribed verbatim to allow for a detailed discourse analysis.

The collected data were systematically analyzed based on the SETT framework developed by Walsh. [3] The analysis involved identifying and categorizing the transcribed teacher talk into four interactional modes: managerial mode, materials mode, skills and systems mode, and classroom context mode. The frequency and duration of each mode were calculated to determine the dominant patterns. Furthermore, the qualitative analysis focused on how these modes related to the application of Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), translanguaging strategies, and the use of paralinguistic features by the teachers to facilitate or hinder students' learning opportunities.

RESULT

The analysis of the classroom interaction data revealed that teacher talk varied significantly across the three participants at SMP N 1 Tayu. The distribution and dominance of the four interactional modes from the Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework were calculated for each teacher. The complete percentage of the interaction modes is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Percentage of SETT Interaction Modes across Teachers

No.	Interactional Mode	Teacher 1 (Grade 7)	Teacher 2 (Grade 2)	Teacher 3 (Grade 3)
1.	Managerial Mode	67%	18%	27%
2.	Materials Mode	19%	62%	45%
3.	Skills and Systems Mode	9%	8%	7%
4.	Classroom Context Mode	5%	12%	21%
Total		100%	100%	100%

As shown in Table 1, Teacher 1 was heavily dominated by the managerial mode at 67%, which was primarily used for classroom management, delivering instructions, and organizing learning transitions. In contrast, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 demonstrated a clear dominance of the materials mode at 62% and 45% respectively. This mode was utilized to discuss the lesson content through a structured turn-taking pattern.

Furthermore, the skills-and-systems mode was employed by all teachers (ranging from 7% to 9%) to support students' understanding of specific language features such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Meanwhile, the classroom context mode was most prominently used by Teacher 3 (21%), followed by Teacher 2 (12%) and Teacher 1 (5%), to foster social interaction, encourage reflection, and maximize student engagement in the classroom.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicated that the deployment of teacher talk modes was highly contextual and varied according to the teachers' pedagogical goals and the students' grade levels. The heavy dominance of the managerial mode (67%) by Teacher 1 in Grade 7 suggested that early-stage language learners required extensive direction, structured transitions, and explicit classroom management. This aligned with previous research stating that lower-level classrooms often necessitate a higher volume of managerial talk to establish routines and maintain order. ^[1] Conversely, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 exhibited a preference for the materials-oriented mode (62% and 45%

respectively), focusing heavily on the textbook material and language content. While this mode facilitated a structured approach to lesson delivery, it often limited spontaneous interaction, as the turn-taking pattern was tightly controlled by the teacher. ^[4]

A notable finding was the high percentage of the classroom context mode utilized by Teacher 3 (21%). This indicated a stronger emphasis on fostering genuine social interaction and giving students more "space for learning," which is a core tenet of Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC). ^[2] By allowing students to direct the conversation and express personal feelings, Teacher 3 successfully created opportunities for authentic language use. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that across all modes, the strategic application of translanguaging served as a critical scaffolding tool. Teachers frequently switched between English and Indonesian to clarify complex instructions, especially in the managerial and skills-and-systems modes, ensuring that students did not experience anxiety due to language barriers. ^[5]

Despite these positive observations, the study identified certain pitfalls in the teachers' interactional patterns. Across the participants, there were frequent instances of extended teacher echo and automatic turn-completion. When teachers immediately repeated student answers or completed sentences for them, it inadvertently reduced the students' wait time and minimized their speech production opportunities. This practice could hinder the development of students' autonomy in communication.

Additionally, paralinguistic features such as gestures, facial expressions, and strategic pauses were observed to be crucial modifiers of teacher talk, often compensating for vocabulary limitations among the students.

A limitation of this study was its focus on only three teachers within a single institution, which may not represent the diverse interactional styles in other Indonesian junior high schools. Nevertheless, these findings underscored the importance of raising teachers' awareness of their own talk. By utilizing the SETT framework for self-evaluation, teachers can critically analyze their interactional flaws and intentionally modify their talk to maximize learning opportunities. ^[3]

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study demonstrated that the evaluation of teacher talk through the SETT framework effectively revealed the interactional patterns and competence of English teachers at SMP N 1 Tayu. The dominance of interactional modes shifted based on pedagogical needs, where younger grades required more managerial talk, while higher grades allowed for more materials and context-driven interactions. While the teachers successfully utilized scaffolding, strategic translanguaging, and paralinguistic features to support student understanding, the frequent occurrence of teacher echo and automatic turn-completion remained a weakness that restricted students' speech opportunities. These findings suggest that implementing regular self-evaluation using the SETT framework is essential for teachers

to optimize their classroom discourse and enhance students' language learning opportunities.

Declaration by Authors

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