

The Effect of Classroom Interaction on Developing the Learner's Speaking Skill as perceived by students and the English language Teachers.

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Abstract

The present study searches on the concept of interaction that should take place in class. many researchers claim that through classroom interaction knowledge can be constructed and skills can be developed. Teachers' roles and responsibilities were changed in the direction of facilitators of the learning and teaching processes. The sample of this study consisted of 14 teachers and thirty four students of third class of the Basic Education College University during the academic year of 2012-2013. A questionnaire is sent to the sample. On the basis of the results of this study, conclusions are drawn and recommendations made.

1. Statement of the problem

Gass & Torres (2005:27) define interaction as exchanges in which there is some indication that an utterance has not been entirely understood. Ellis (1999: 48) believes that interaction is the means through which learners obtain data for Learning. Ellis (1994: 54) defines interaction as when the participants of equal status that share similar need, make an effort to understand each other. He also mentions that some other factors that influence interaction, except status, are: the nature of the task, characteristics of participants and participant structure.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge no investigation has been conducted in an attempt to study the effect of classroom interaction on the developing of the learner's speaking skills. Therefore, this study is needed to fill this gap of information. The present study is an attempt to achieve deep knowledge about the interaction inside the classroom in order to develop the speaking skills for the students in side their college.

1.1 Aims of the study

This study aims at:

- 1- identifying the reasons that impede pupils' interaction in side classroom in order to develop the learners' speaking, and
2. finding out some solutions and suggestions which reduce the impact of these reasons on pupils' interaction with themselves or with their teachers.

In order to achieve these aims, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1-What are the causes that impede pupil's interaction inside the class?
- 2-How could we reduce the impact of these causes on pupils' interaction?

1.2.Limits of the study

This study is limited to the investigation of the factors that impede pupils' interaction at third class College of Basic Education Missan University in the year 2012-2013.

2.Classroom Interaction

The concept of interaction is defined as “reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions. Interaction occurs when these objects and events naturally influence one to another (Wagner, 1994:8). Therefore, interactions do not occur only from one side, there must be mutual influence through giving and receiving messages in order to achieve communication.

The concept of interaction has a significant importance in the classroom too; it is an essential part in learning and teaching processes. Allwright and Baily (1991 :60) hold that interaction is something people can do together i.e. collectively. Obviously, in the classroom it is considered as important for the teacher to manage who should talk, to whom, on what topic, in what language and so on. However, none of this can change the fact that classroom interaction focuses on the learners cooperation.

Mackey (1999:75) carry out a research to address the issue of the relationship between interaction and second language development. He asserted that the nature of interaction and the role of the learner are critical factors along with the type of structure that may be affected through interaction. He concluded in his study that one feature that interacts with the learner internal factors to facilitate development is the participation in the interaction through which the condition is provided for the negotiation of meaning.Ellis (1999:67) believes that interaction is the means through which learners obtain data for learning .Tavares (2006: 21) recently investigates how teacher and his/her students interact to each other in the EFL classroom to keep an atmosphere of cooperation and motivation observing the way they negotiated their images. Trying to

decipher the communicative intentions of the participants through contextualized cues such as style, pause, intonation, gestures and face, the author divided the participants speech moves into five types of strategies: contact, institutional, pedagogic, cooperation and spontaneous. Among all these strategies, she found out that there was a mixture of strategy uses between the participants. Whenever the teacher started with the cooperation strategy, students answered with the contact and vice versa. Therefore, the negotiation of images could be better applied for interpersonal relations between the participants rather than probing teaching/learning of the target language. That is, oral interaction tended to occur more when the pedagogic and institutional strategies were not at stake but of the contact and of spontaneous type, the ones that favor humor, affection, thus a more friendly and informal interaction between teacher and students.

2.1 1. The Skill of Speaking

Speaking is a basic skill that Language Learners should master with the other language skills. It is defined as a complex process of sending and receiving messages through the use of verbal expressions, but it also involves non verbal symbols such as gestures and facial expressions. Hedge (2000: 261) defines speaking as “a skill by which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed.” That is to say speaking is an important skill which deserves more attention in both first and second language because it reflects people's thoughts and personalities. Luoma (2004: 1) argues that “speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a Long time to develop.” The skill of speaking is quite different from writing in its typical grammatical, lexical and discourse patterns. Moreover, some of the processing skills needed in speaking differ from the ones involved in reading and writing. Also, second language speaking differs from first language speaking in terms of the lack of grammar and vocabulary knowledge of learners, i.e., the process of building utterances accurately and retrieving words does not yet become automatic in second language speaking (Thornbury 2005:50).

3.Population and Sample Selection

The sample of this study consists of teachers and students ,therefore the total number of the involved sample of the teachers is(14),whereas the total number of the involved sample of the students is(34). These samples have been selected randomly from its original populations. The sample is distributed as follows :four of the teachers are reserved for the purpose of obtaining test reliability and ten of student are reserved for

the same purpose .After excluding the four teachers, the total number teachers' sample is (10), and the total number of students sample is (24) after excluding (10) of them.

3.1 Construction of the Questionnaire

The first thing to be made is the selection of the study instrument. The researchers have constructed two questionnaires one them for teachers and another for students, the first Questionnaire consists of(9) items these items were sent to the teachers. The second questionnaire consists of (10)items and these items were sent to the students. The questions are either closed questions, requiring from the teachers or students to choose “yes” or “no” answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices, or open questions where teachers and students are requested to give explanation or suggest other alternatives. See table one and two.

Table(1)
Number of items, Areas and suitable options for the teacher’s questionnaire

No	Area	Option
1.	Specify your degree	
	a- MA (Master/ Magister)	
	b- PHD (Doctorate)	
2.	How many years have you been teaching English language?	
	a-1-10 years	
	b-10-15 years	
	c-15-20 years	
3.	In the classroom, are you	
	a- Talking	
	b- Average talking	
	c-Less taking	
4.	How often do you invite your students to interact with each other?	
	a- Always	
	b- Sometimes	
	c- Never	
5.	What do you do to make passive students interact in the classroom?	
	a- Ask easy questions	

	b- Choose interesting topics	
	c- Add additional degrees	
6.	Which of these aspects do you focus on in classroom interaction?	
	a- Fluency	
	b- Accuracy	
	c- Both	
7.	What are the speaking activities you focus on most to create a successful interaction?	
	a- Dialogues	
	b- Discourses and discussions	
	c- Presentations	
8.	If your students say anything wrong during interaction, do you	
	a- Interrupt them to correct .	
	b- Correct them later	
	c- Ask students to correct each other	
	d- Do not correct at all	
9.	What are the speaking problems students most face in Oral Expression?	
	a- Inhibition because of shyness, anxiety and stress.	
	b- Shyness of making mistakes.	
	c- Interference of using mother tongue.	
	d- Other problems (please justify).	

Table(2)

Number of items, Areas and suitable options for the student's questionnaire

No	Area	Option
1.	Is your level in English	
	a- Good	
	b- Average	
	c- Less than average	
2.	What type of relationship exists between you and your teacher of Oral Expression?	

	a- Good	
	b-no relationship	
3-	Who does most of the talk in the classroom in Oral Expression?	
	a- Teacher	
	b- Students	
4-	How often the teacher gives you the opportunity to interact (give and take) with him?	
	a- Always	
	b- Sometimes	
	c- Never	
5-	How often you interact with your classmates inside the classroom?	
	a- Always	
	b- Sometimes	
	c- Never	
6-	Do you interact in English with your classmates outside the classroom?	
	a- Always	
	b- Sometimes	
	c- Rarely	
	d- Never	
7-	When you interact in the classroom, it is	
	a- You who wants	
	b- The teacher who asks you	
8-	How often your teacher interrupts you to correct your speaking mistakes?	
	a- Very often	
	b- Sometimes	
	c- Rarely	
	d- Never	
9-	- Does regular interaction in the classroom help you to reduce your speaking mistakes?	
	a- Yes	
	b- No	
10-	If you do not interact, it is because:	
	a- You are not talkative	
	b- The topic is not interesting	
	c- The teacher does not motivate his students	
	d- You fear to make mistakes	

3.2 Pilot Study:

Four teachers of English Department at Basic Education College of Maysan University are chosen randomly in order to find out the appropriateness of the questionnaire items for the teachers, whereas ten of students were chosen for the same purpose to the field of this study.

3.3 Questionnaire Validity:

An instrument validity is a reflection of how well it measures what is designed to measure Bergman(981:150).Validity of a test is “the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure and nothing else” Heaton(1988:159).Face validity is achieved by exposing the test to a jury of specialists in the fields of EFL. In the light of the juror’s comments and suggestions, some items are dropped out, and others are rewritten.

3.4 Reliability:

Gronlund (1981:199) states that reliability is an important characteristic of evaluating results. Brown (1987:221) regards reliability as" the careful specification of analytical scoring instrument that can increase scorer's reliability".

In order to check the reliability of the adopted questionnaires ,a sample of fourteen students and teachers is chosen from the original population of this study. Data obtained by the researchers themselves and another observer have been statistically correlated to each other by using person correlation coefficient .The correlation coefficient is 0.86 which is considered a high degree of reliability

3.5 Administration of the questionnaire:

After the questionnaires have gained its validity and reliability qualification, they have been sent to the selected samples (teachers and students) on the 6th, November 2012. Therefore they have distributed the questionnaire to the both samples so as to compute the scores of his test . Later on the questionnaires are collected to be calculated. The following statistical means have been used to achieve the aim of this study:

3. 6 The Statistical Tools:

The following statistical means have been used to achieve the aim of this study:

Frequency

1-Relative Frequency= -----

Sum of frequency

2-Percentage of frequency =Relative frequency×100

4. Analysis of Data:

At the end of this study and in order to realize its aims , the collected data have been analysed statistically after the administration of the questionnaires to the samples of this study.

A-Analysis Data that related to Teachers'Questionnare

Table(1)

1- Specify your degree

option	N	%
a- MA (Master/ Magister)	8	80
b- PHD (Doctorate)	2	20
Total	10	100%

Table (1) indicates that(80%) of teachers hold master degree and(20%) hold PHD degree.

Table(2)

2- How many years have you been teaching English language?

Option	N	%
a-1-10 years	7	70
b-10-15 years	1	10
c-15-20 years	2	20
Total	10	100%

Table (2) states that(70%) of teachers have an expertise of (1-10)years of teaching,(10%)have an expertise (10-15),and (20%) have an expertise of(15-20) years.

Table(3)

3- In the classroom, are you

Option	N	%
a- Talking	1	10
b- Average talking	9	90
Total	10	100%

Teachers mention that(90%) of them are average talking and(10%) are talking. This fact indicates in table(3)

Table(4)

4-How often do you invite your students to interact with each other?

Option	N	%
a- Always	7	70
b- Sometimes	3	30
c- Never	0	00
Total	10	100%

It is clear from table(4) that(70%) of teachers are always invite their students to interact with each other, whereas(30%) of teachers are sometimes invite their students to interact with each other.

Table(5)

5- What do you do to make passive students interact in the classroom?

option	N	%
a- Ask easy questions	5	50
b- Choose interesting topics	4	40
c- Add additional degrees	1	10
Total	10	100

There are(50%) of the teachers ask easy question in order to make passive students interact in classroom,(40%) chose interesting topic and(10%) add additional degrees so as to encourage the passive students to interact in the lesson.

Table(6)

6- Which of these aspects do you focus on in classroom interaction?

option	N	%
a- Fluency	7	70
b- Accuracy	1	10
c- Both	2	20

Total	10	100%
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There are (70%) of teachers focus on fluency in classroom interaction, (10%) focus on accuracy, and (30%) focus on both(i.e. fluency and accuracy) when they interact students inside classroom.

Table(7)

7- What are the speaking activities you focus on most to create a successful interaction?

Option	N	%
a- Dialogues	1	10
b- Discourses and discussions	1	10
c- Presentations	8	80
Total	10	100%

It is clear from table(7)that (80%) of teachers apply presentations ,and (10) use and discourses and discussion, dialogues for creating a successful interaction.

Table(8)

8- If your students say anything wrong during interaction, do you

Option	N	%
a- Interrupt them to correct .	10	100
b- Correct them later	00	00
c- Ask students to correct each other	00	00
d- Do not correct at all	00	00
Total	10	100%

All the teachers in the above area believe that the students 'interruption is useful when the y make some mistakes during the interaction of lesson period .This fact is concluded from table (8).

Table(9)

9- What are the speaking problems students most face in Oral Expression?

Option	N	%
a- Inhibition because of shyness, anxiety and stress.	0	00
b- Shyness of making mistakes.	9	90
c- Interference of using mother tongue.	1	10

d-Other problems (please justify).	0	00
Total	10	100%

Table (9) indicates that most of teachers(90%) are surely the shyness of making mistakes are the main problem facing students in oral expression. Moreover(10%) of teachers think that the interference of using mother tongue.

B-Analysis Data that related toStudents'Questionnare

Table(1)

1-Is your level in English

option	N	%
a-good	1	7.2
b-average	13	92.8
c-less than average	0	0 0
Total	14	100%

We can notice that the highest percentage of students (92.8%) claims that their level in English is average whereas (7.2%)their level in English is good.

Table(2)

2- What type of relationship exists between you and your teacher of Oral Expression?

option	N	%
a- Good	8	57.1
b-no relationship	6	42.9
Total	14	100

Table (2) states that(57.1) of students have a good relationship, and (42.9) of students have no relationship with their teachers.

Table(3)

3- Who does most of the talk in the classroom in Oral Expression?

option	N	%
a- Teacher	14	100
b- Students	0	00
Total	14	100

All the students mention that the teacher is the one who talks in the class ,this true states in table (3)

Table(4)

4- How often the teacher gives you the opportunity to interact (give and take) with him?

option	N	%
a- Always	6	42.9
b- Sometimes	8	57.9
c- Never	00	00
Total	14	100

It is clear from table (4) that(57.1) of students indicate that the teacher sometimes gives them the opportunity to interact, Moreover (42.9) indicate that the teacher always gives them a chance to interact.

Table(5)

5- How often you interact with your classmates inside the classroom?

option	N	%
a- Always	0	00
b- Sometimes	5	35.71
c- Never	9	64.29
Total	14	100

It is obvious from the table (5) that (64.29)of the students state that the teacher never give them a chance to interact with their classmates inside the class, and (35.71) of the students state that the teacher gives them a chance to interact with their classmates.

Table(6)

6- Do you interact in English with your classmates outside the classroom?

Option	N	%
a- Always	0	00
b- Sometimes	3	21.43
c- Never	11	78.57
Total	14	100

Table (6) indicates that(78.57) of the students never interact in English outside of the class, whereas (21.43) of students say sometimes we interact outside of the class.

Table(7)

7- When you interact in the classroom, it is

Option	N	%
a- You who want	2	14.29
b- The teacher who asks you	12	85.71
Total	14	100

It is clear from table (7) that(85.71) of students indicate that the teacher who asks question, and(2) of students state that they want.

Table(8)

8- How often your teacher interrupts you to correct your speaking mistakes?

option	N	%
a- Very often	0	00
b- Sometimes	12	85.71
c- Rarely	2	14.29
d- Never	0	00
Total	100	100

It is obvious from table (8) there are (85.71) of students say that the teacher sometimes interrupts them when they make some mistakes ,and (14.29) of students say that the teacher never interrupts them while they make mistakes.

Table(9)

9- Does regular interaction in the classroom help you to reduce your speaking mistakes?

option	N	%
a- Yes	13	92.86
b- No	1	7.14
Total	100	100

The total percentage of the students who mention “regular interaction in the classroom help them to reduce speaking mistakes is(92.86),whereas(7.14) of students believe that regular interaction doesn’t help them to reduce their speaking mistakes. These facts state in table (9).

Table(10)

10- If you do not interact, it is because:

option	N	%
a- You are not talkative	0	00
b- The topic is not interesting	2	14.29
c- The teacher does not	4	28.57

motivate his students		
d- You fear to make mistakes	8	57.14
Total	100	100

Students who fear to make mistakes if they interact during the lesson are(57.14),but (28.57) think that the teacher doesn't motivate them, and(14.29) believe that the topic is not interesting them to interact in the lesson.

Conclusion:

- 1-It is clear from table (1) for teacher most who responded to our questionnaire have MA with less experience than ten years.
- 2-Teachers always invite their student to interact inside their class, ask easy question, they concentrate on fluency in English, but little of them give some scores to encourage student to interact.
- 3-Teachers focus on presentation to create interaction and neglect the dialogue and discourse with discussion in interaction process.
- 4-All the teachers interrupt their students when they make mistakes, and the most problem that face the teachers in interaction is the shyness of students.
- 5-It is nearly all the students have average level in English language ,and they have a good relationship with the teachers.
- 6- All the students mention that the teacher the one who talks in the class ,and he sometimes gives them a chance to interact.
- 7-students fear of mistakes, therefore they don't interact in the class, and rarely use the speaking skill outside of the class.

Recommendation

- 1- Enhancing the speaking skill of foreign or second language learners is a difficult task. It requires some experience and regular practice to produce the language accurately and encode the intended messages of other speakers.
- 2-Teachers should encourage the students to use English language inside and outside of their class, and they can develop the learner to interact by giving some scores .i.e apply feedback for their students.
- 3-The teachers must not focus on presentation and neglect the roll of dialogue an discussion, Moreover the teachers should not interrupt their students as much as possible, because such as technique may not encourage the students to interact with teacher or even thought with their friends.

4-Since the teacher is the one who talks in the classroom, therefore the researchers hope that the teachers should concentrate on the students. i.e ., they allow them to talk freedom in order to reduce the shyness of students .

5-The students should spend their free time by interacting with their friends, They can also develop their abilities of interaction by listening for some conversations discourses and apply such style with some friends as much as possible.

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