



ANALYZING EFL CLASSROOM INTERACTION IN CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING AMONG CLASS MEMBERS

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ABSTRACT

Face-to-face class interaction is extraordinary matter dealing with the new normal of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there has not been various preliminary research and works of literature related to face-to-face interactions in English language learning after the COVID-19 break, especially with contextual teaching and learning approach. Thus, the present study aims at exploring the interaction process among teachers and students in the learning process in an academic atmosphere and classify the types of classroom interactions implemented during the meetings. The method of current research was a case study and used instrument of video recording from participant observation conducted in classroom activities. The research data showed that the interaction process among teachers-students, and students-students ran well throughout the REACT (reflecting-engaging-activating-cooperating-transferring) instructional stages of contextual teaching and learning eventhough some students experienced that learning English was their first experiences in the new normal of the face-to-face meeting. Some pattern interactions were also clearly described and discussed regarding the type of classroom interaction. From the results that have been elaborated, other researchers are also recommended to apply the same interaction pattern in any educational levels. Research limitations and implications are also discussed as well in the session.

Keywords: *Classroom interaction; contextual teaching and learning; feedback; response*

ABSTRAK

Interaksi kelas tatap muka menjadi hal yang luar biasa untuk dihadapi di masa setelah pandemi COVID-19. Namun demikian, belum ada berbagai penelitian sebelumnya terkait interaksi tatap muka dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris pasca masa pandemi COVID-19, terutama dengan pendekatan pembelajaran kontekstual. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi proses interaksi antara guru dan siswa dalam proses pembelajaran dalam suasana akademik dan mengklasifikasikan jenis-jenis interaksi kelas yang dilaksanakan selama pertemuan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi kasus dengan instrumen penelitian berupa rekaman video observasi partisipan yang dilakukan dalam kegiatan kelas. Data penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses interaksi di antara mereka berjalan dengan baik selama tahap pembelajaran REACT (reflecting-engaging-activating-cooperating-transferring) pada proses pembelajaran kontekstual meskipun beberapa siswa mengalami bahwa belajar bahasa Inggris adalah pengalaman pertama mereka dalam pertemuan tatap muka. Beberapa pola interaksi dijelaskan dan dibahas secara rinci mengenai jenis interaksi kelas. Dari

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hasil yang telah diuraikan, peneliti lain juga disarankan untuk menerapkan pola interaksi yang sama yang dapat digunakan pada level pendidikan lainnya. Selain itu, implikasi dan keterbatasan penelitian juga dibahas pada bagian tidak terpisahkan dari penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci: *Inisiasi; Interaksi kelas; Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Kontekstual; Respon; Umpan balik*

INTRODUCTION

Fulfilling the demand of 21st century skill for students in learning, contextual teaching and learning has pivotal role as the part of learning strategies recommended to be implemented since its connection newly acquired knowledge with the demands and needs of students in everyday life which is believed to create meaningful learning to students (Colace et al., 2020; Dewi & Primayana, 2019; Kosassy et al., 2018; Yuwandra & Arnawa, 2020). Therefore, the implementation and effectiveness of contextual teaching and learning (henceforward CTL) has been widely studied by several education and language experts from various perspectives (Hakim et al., 2020; Hyun et al., 2020; Nawas, 2018; Satriani et al., 2012; Selvianiresa & Prabawanto, 2017). Previous research also mentioned the process of how the learning procedures or syntax must be followed by students during the learning process starting from preparation to the evaluation process takes place (Hyun et al., 2020). In addition, comparisons between the use of CTL approaches with conventional methods were also carried out experimentally to measure the effectiveness of CTL approaches in elementary school students (Selvianiresa & Prabawanto, 2017). Furthermore, Haerazi et al. (2019) also revealed that their action research showed that the practice of CTL increased students' learning motivation which ultimately has an impact on increasing students' reading skills at the junior high school level. From this description, CTL posits the usefulness of education at several levels of education, both implemented in Indonesia and the global context.

Besides the effectiveness and its pedagogical implementation, other perspectives of exerting contextual approach in classroom setting also offer other beneficial implications. Li et al. (2021) mentioned on their survey studies that learning factors and contextual factors influenced on the students' flow experience. The research result showed contextual factors affected students' intrinsic motivation. In regard to the motivation, provision of game based contextually on students' needs improved on students' writing performance due to their developing interest and motivation during activities involving (Lin et al., 2018). Supporting the elaborated statements, Fu et al. (2019) urged that implementing game-based learning with contextual purpose assisted students' in increasing their writing performance. Also, they perceived positive feelings on engaging the teaching and learning activities including interesting atmospheres and great students' participation. This indicates that contextual approach of learning provides great impact to students as well as today's demand in the globalized era.

In addition, the exertion of CLT offers several strategies in the learning process in the classroom. REACT is a teaching and learning contextual learning strategy supported by Crawford (2001) which is systemically abbreviated for reflecting, engaging, activating, cooperating, and transferring. First, reflecting means that in the learning process, teachers have to connect the knowledge that students already

have with the material to be studied to get meaningful understanding and be efficacious the importance of the material they are studying particularly their life needs (Nawas, 2018). Second, engaging is an activity involving students in the learning process in the classroom so that students' and teacher's talk corresponds to a balanced portion of several learning activities (Mammadova, 2021). This assumes that emphasizing the implementation of students-centered activities with teachers' assistance might be fully great idea for this stage. Then, activating means an activity that facilitates students to integrate the material they have learned with their background knowledge, which can be implemented optimally in writing learning (Satriani et al., 2012). Cooperating is a learning syntax that must be implemented in this lesson to actualize students' abilities in applying communication skills, negotiating, working in teams, and accepting the strengths and weaknesses of group members holistically. Jacobs & Hall (2002) and Yang et al. (2022) recommend that a strategy in cooperative learning is recommended at this instructional stage. Lastly, transferring is used to measure students' abilities in conveying or expressing their' abilities to the material that they have learnt in the teaching and learning process. Answering the ideal assessment for this step is providing authentic assessment or alternative assessment for teachers which of course, a class atmosphere naturally students' abilities shown in the learning process (Hyun et al., 2020).

From the whole series or instructional design of CLT, classroom interactions among teachers and students are main elements in classroom activities both verbal and physical or gesture. Class interaction with initiation-response and feedback pattern of communication supported by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) in Ayouni (2019) is a well-known and well-applied pattern of classroom activities from various levels of education before further studies of interaction matters (Molinari et al., 2013). Furthermore, Li (2018) revealed that classroom interaction with IRF gives dynamic results to the interaction process among teachers and students, but the use of native language is a way to mediate and stimulate how students learn to be more interactive in the learning process. In addition, Harmer (2006) in Mammadova (2021) wrote that classroom interaction is very influential on learning outcomes where teachers will measure students' abilities if they might communicate or express their ideas actively, understand and contextualize material they have learnt. He proposed the pattern of interaction especially for teaching and learning process is well-known as ESA (engaging, studying, and activating) which deals with engaging is the process how teachers communicate and facilitate students to participate actively during classroom activities including beginning to the end of learning stages in the mode of face-to-face meetings, online learning or hybrid learning. The present studying stage then focuses on the teachers' talk on providing comprehensible input to students through various activities depending on the intended learning objectives. The last point activating means the portion of teachers' talk is lower than students' talk to promote students' actualization in their understanding the material they learnt based on their own context of learning. Also, Amalia (2018) claimed that engaging students especially young students with relevant activities academically and non-academically posit beneficial impact to students' performance. Supporting the previous statement, Hill & Flynn (2014) stated that in the learning process it is necessary to hold an ideal portion that is

relevant to accommodate the teacher's talk and students' talk so that the quality of their interaction is achieved. From aforementioned studies reported that classroom interactions still need to be analyzed to find out how students go through in each instructional design in CTL. Regarding the importance of interaction, another previous study revealed that using students-centered approach is an alternative way to facilitate students' communicative and collaborative work during their academic activities through negotiation, initiation and conducting their practices. They also mentioned that students could perform effective and communicate meaningfully as the language function since they delivered purposively to fulfil their comprehensive tasks (Mafruudloh & Fitriati, 2020).

The classroom interactions among teachers and students contribute on greater learning atmosphere through whole series of academic activities in classroom practices (Rahmat & Munir, 2018), by means of CTL, teachers are demanded to create students-centered activities to set up all understanding, knowledge and insights which is meaningful for their academic and non-academic context (Amri & Ekaningsih, 2018). Several students-learning activities from reported previous studies remain beneficial contribution on students' cognitive, socio affective and motivational performance (Ansi, 2022; Benlahcene et al., 2020). However, none of the previous research discussed how classroom interactions among teachers and students conducted in CTL even though it is seen that the entire series of instructional designs fully contain interactions among students -teachers and students with other students. Also, the classroom members interactions highlight both in pairs or in groups. Thus, this study aims to explore further how the process of classroom interaction provided in CTL and the classification of the IRF patters in the learning process carried out by all class members in the literacy community which is focused on young students in one literacy community in West Java, Indonesia.

METHOD

Research Design

The present study used a case study proposed by Yin (2011) which aims at analyzing classroom interactions that has been conducted during the teaching and learning process in each instructional design carried out in classroom activities. Furthermore, the interaction pattern or cycle classification class interaction would also be explored in detail to get an idea of how the patterns of interaction and communication in English classes under the approach of CTL. The present study dealt with some systematic procedures to collect the qualitative data obtained during the teaching and learning process. First, the researchers focused on developing instruments or considering what points will be obtained in face-to-face class interactions. After that, they collaborated with other student researchers to share tasks during the data collection process which the first researcher served as a teacher who carried out the interaction process during the contextual learning process. Then we recorded while students were doing their tasks, assistant teachers, and providers of activity materials during the CTL process. After the video recording data was collected in several class activities, they made a transcript of the obtained video, analyzed transcripts thematically, and compared the research

results with previous research that related to the current research, also concludes the results of the research that has been conducted.

Research Participants

Research participants of the present study dealt with 30 young students with multicultural backgrounds such as age, education, family, gender, school and technology readiness, also literacy level. The reason why they were chosen as participants was because the researchers wanted to collect data from a newly formed literacy community by applying CTL in the learning process. In addition, one teacher and three student researchers were also actively involved in the data collection process which is carried out in a participatory manner in the classroom activities. In terms of age, young students have been classified into two educational levels namely low-grade basic education which includes students from 5-8 years old or kindergarten to grade 3 elementary school. Meanwhile, those aged 9 to 11 years old, were classified in high-class basic education. This classification refers to the theory from Harmer (2006) in Mammadova (2021) which also classified the young learners into some levels in regards to the similar needs of learning and characteristics. The decided considerations to categorize them into two groups are the provision of learning materials and activities to avoid boredom. The educational background of the research participants also colored the diversity of their backgrounds because the majority of them attended Islamic schools, some of them are attending regular elementary schools, and the rest of them are enrolling in modern Islamic schools with additional curricula. With the aforementioned condition, the researchers considered the process of grouping and giving activities in class. Furthermore, the family's point of view is also a consideration background because they have varied family backgrounds with the majority of their families being laborers and the rest being employees of both the private and the state sectors. Technology readiness is also a consideration for the background of the researchers because students in the 21st century should have better technological readiness than students who studied in the previous centuries. Seeing this urgency, the background of students in this literacy community also varied, ranging from active users of gadgets, having gadgets without free access, and without gadgets and without internet access. Finally, the literacy level is a crucial point that must be considered because the majority of them have sufficient education and technology, but the literacy level is considered to be middle to lower position which is indeed a big task not only the partial scope of citizens but also Indonesian nation.

Data Collection Techniques

Several video recordings of participant observation were also collected to obtain the required data. In addition, the teacher and 3 student researchers also observed the process of class interaction that systematically conducted during several classroom activities that were implemented throughout CTL. From the collected data, thematic analysis by Cohen et al. (2017) was used to proceed the observation data from video recordings and direct observations by researchers. Several activity procedures are also systematically carried out, such as the transcription process where video recording is in verbal and non-verbal forms into written language. Furthermore, the classification process is also analyzed and

explored in detail about classroom interactions in the contextual implementation of teaching and learning with the REACT: reflecting-engaging-activating-cooperating-and transferring stages in the literacy community. In addition, the IRF pattern is also explored in detail to get an overview of the interaction patterns that occurred in the research process. In addition to the previous process, the researchers also carried out the interpretation process to get some comparative captures from previous studies so that the research being carried out had impact values both pedagogically and practically. The last is the interpreting process where the researchers concluded the results of the study in terms of strengths and weaknesses as well as recommendations that can be drawn from a pedagogical, professional, and practical point of view both in the field of English language learning and educators and in general.

FINDINGS

Classroom interaction in CTL

Classroom interaction amidst the learning process is following the instructional stages of CTL supported by Crawford (2001) dealing with REACT (reflecting-engaging-activating-cooperating-transferring) which has been implemented in the face-to-face learning process in the literacy community at one village in West Java, Indonesia. The data were collected and analyzed thematically into some percentage results. The highest number of interactions among students and teachers were at the instructional stage on activating with teacher conversed more than students. The data shows that the portion of teacher's speaking talk, giving instructions, and questions asking are 53.6% and students are 46.4%. This shows that activating requires more intensive communication than other instructional stages so that the material transformation process can be carried out optimally. In addition, several activities carried out by the teacher at this stage were drilling, practice, and puppets as well as storytelling. It can be seen from the conversation that the teacher repeatedly trained students to sound the correct English vocabulary with unique intonation to remember so that students input these activities in their long-term memory. The following is an excerpt of how the teacher trains students to pronounce the correct vocabulary in English.

Excerpt 1

*Teacher : Listen and repeat after me, pickup truck, pickup truck, pickup truck
(unique intonation)*

Students : [following teachers' intonation] pickup truck, pickup truck, pickup truck (unique intonation)

In addition, to activate students' knowledge about the characters of the story, students are invited to watch storytelling with puppets about the name of the cow animal puppet (the puppet is called Coco).

In contrast, the least number of class interaction data was transferring instructional stage with the opposite portion where students dominated at this stage with the number of conversational presentations was 95.7% and teacher's talk was at 4.3%. This stage accommodates and provides more opportunities for

students to express their proficiency to the material they have learned. In addition, at this stage, the teacher has measured students' abilities in the learning process through a performance-based assessment. Based on the results of the data that has been analyzed, the teacher provided learning activities in the form of picture-answering and spelling activities. Interestingly, the analyzed data, the video recording analysis, showed that student interactions were also more than teacher interactions at the cooperative instructional stage at 40 times the number of utterances and 30 times the utterances respectively expressed in class interaction among student members in learning activities focused on matching picture activities in pairs. The found data indicated clearly that the teacher offered convenience instructions about the procedures for playing the game. After that, they responded to the instructions given by the teacher with physical responses to prepare vocabularies that they had to report to the teacher. After they complete their assignments, they could report their works to her and the example is provided according to the following excerpt.

Excerpt 2

- Teacher* : *Are you ready?*
Students : *Yes, I am ready. [They look for mates who hold their matching pictures or words of cards]. In same time, they shouted, aeroplane!, car!, bicycle, etc [they looked enjoying the activities of finding the partners]*
- Teacher* : *Time to report*
Students : *[in pairs, students show the picture and word card, then they pronounced and spelled the word matched the picture]. Pickup Truck [Pairs pronunciation], P-I-C-K-U-P-T-R-U-C-K*

Furthermore, the data that has been found and analyzed at the reflecting stage revealed that the teacher's utterance was 61.5% while the student's talk is positioned lower with a percentage of 38.5%. Judging from the description of the data, the teacher carried out several reflection activities which emphasized the contextualization of students' prior knowledge with their needs and circumstances in their daily life through several activities such as prayer habits, brainstorming, and naming the puppets used in storytelling. In addition, the engaging instructional stage also revealed data that the teacher's talk was more than that of students with 56.8% and 44.2% respectively. Based on the description of the transcript, she was seen several times using gestures to give English instructions to her students. All the data previously presented, the fact showed that all classroom interactions carried out among classroom members both verbally and non-verbally are by the REACT contextual teaching and learning instructional stages with the following infographic information.

Table 1. Students-Teacher Interaction in Contextual Teaching and Learning

No	Stages	Point of View	Number	Percentage
1	Reflecting	Teachers	24	61.5%
		Students	15	38.5%
2	Engaging	Teachers	25	56.8%
		Students	19	44.2%
3	Activating	Teachers	52	53.6%
		Students	45	46.4%
4	Cooperating	Teachers	30	42.6%%
		Students	40	57.1%
5	Transferring	Teachers	1	4.3%
		Students	22	95.7%

From Table 1, the presented data shows that the process of interaction among teacher and students in the teaching and learning process throughout the learning activities which occurred at each REACT instructional stage CTL with data presentation evenly distributed with relevant portions at each stage. From the information in the aforementioned table, the presented interaction including communication, talk and gesturing in the classroom which have almost balanced portion among them are in three types of stages: engaging, activating, and cooperating. At this stage, they carried out several activities that supported the referred activities to several activities such as drilling, practice, journaling, field trips, and joint assignments both in groups and pairs. Furthermore, activities in cooperating emphasized student-centered activities such as performance-based assessment, portfolios, and student creations. In the performance-based assessment section, she facilitated students with activities that measure students' abilities according to the material that has been learned, such as pronunciation practice on the flashcard transportation they mastered. In addition, the portfolio was also conducted during the learning process by enhancing students' activity and students' collaboration with others, such as the use of waste as a means of transportation with a project-end outcomes. Finally, they created art creations or handicraft to improve students' abilities at this stage through several activities such as utilizing organic waste as a means of transportation with collages, labeling, and presenting.

Interaction pattern classification in CTL

The analysis results of video recordings data have found 8 categories of class interactions carried out by teachers and students in the learning community in question starting from the opening to the end of the academic activities. Referring to the class interaction theory supported by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) in Ayouni (2019) that the dominantly used class interaction cycle is IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback). The data showed that the type of cycle or pattern of IRF interactions occurred with the highest percentage with 47.4% during the whole activities of learning process. Furthermore, the type of IR interaction ranked second position with a total presentation of 44.9% while the remaining 7.8% presented data was distributed over other types of interactions with several types of unique interaction patterns among students and teachers during the learning process which is briefly described in the following table.

Table 2. Interaction pattern classification in CTL

No	Interaction Cycle	Number	Percentage
1	Initiation-Response (IR)	35	44.9%
2	Initiation-Response-Feedback (IFR)	37	47.4%
3	Initiation (students)-Response (students)	1	1.3%
4	Initiation-Response-Feedback-Response-Feedback (IRFRF)	1	1.3%
5	Initiation-Response-Feedback-Response (IRFR)	1	1.3%
6	Response-Feedback-Response-Response (RFRR)	1	1.3%
7	Initiation-Response-Feedback-Response-Initiation (IRFRI)	1	1.3%
8	Response-No Feedback (R0)	1	1.3%
Total		78	100%

From Table 2 information, the presented data showed that the majority of the interaction patterns among teacher and students occurred in the IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback) pattern noted 37 times during the study on a percentage of 47.4% during the classroom activities. This communication pattern was found in several activities or stages of reflecting, activating, and engaging CTL with initiation starting from the teacher, then students responded and she returned both verbal feedback such as praise and non-verbal feedback such as nodding in agreement, smiling and thumbs up. In addition, the IR (initiation-response) interaction pattern was ranked number 2 with occurrences of 35 (44.9%). This pattern occurred in repeated activities in the activating stage in the drilling activity process where the teacher gave initiation or spelling instructions and students responded teacher instructions simultaneously. Furthermore, the pattern of interaction between students also took place during the learning process in the form of initiation (students)-response (students) with the number of occurrences 1 time at a percentage of 1.3%. This occurs pattern when he (male student) gives explanations to their classmates who need more explanation from their teacher. In addition, other patterns as depicted in the table also occurred during the communication process among students and teachers during the implementation of CTL.

DISCUSSION

From the data findings that have been presented in the previous section, several points are discussed in detail about the classroom interactions that occurred at the CTL stages and the interaction patterns in classroom communication at the intended face-to-face meeting. All instructional stages in CTL performed interaction dynamically with specific communication portions that spread from the stages of reflecting, engaging, activating, cooperating, and transferring. From the findings of the referred data, the researchers found that the first stage of reflecting, engaging, and activating provided the opportunity for the teacher to dominate the conversation in class to transform, review, tell the material, and drill students. The data in line with previous research which emerged that most common teachers' strategy in teaching pronunciation is imitation and repetition (Jafari et al., 2022). In addition, this stage is a crucial communication that must be conveyed by the teacher to students because she has a larger portion of teacher talk than the students. This finding agrees with the statement written by (Harmer, 2008) which states that the ESA stages: engaging-studying and activating accommodate the communication needs of the class according to the inverted pyramid where teacher talk at the engaging and studying stages is around 60 to 70 percent, then the

activating stage has a portion of 30 percent. The two stages presented by both experts about activating have different meanings and scopes, where activating in Crawford (2001) refers to activities that emphasize teacher accommodation in providing an overview, analogy, and integrated practice about the material being studied so that interaction the teacher still dominates while activating (Harmer, 2006) in Mammadova (2021) are focused on student practice activities both as a whole, in groups and individuals as it is compared at the stage of cooperating and transferring. This is also following previous research conducted by (Hakim et al., 2020) which described that activating has an important role in the formation of habituation patterns carried out by research participants so it has become the most important part of class communication is tendenciously highlighted at this instructional stage. Second, physical or non-verbal communication performed by students provides a unique description of the interactions provided by students to understand or carry out teacher instructions which dominate at the cooperative stage. It is a normal phenomenon for young learners to express their responses, ideas, or do something (Nuraeni, 2019).

Regarding to answer second research question which deals with classroom interaction pattern occurred in the face-to-face meeting in literacy community also corroborates preliminary study which focusing on the dominant pattern IRF in classroom activities (Ayouni, 2019). This fact found that various activities among teacher and students transformed several ideas and information and also some stages of CTL accommodate the students' talk more than teacher's talk (Agbashi & Madhichie, 2020). Thus, the consideration of the IRF classroom interaction pattern occurred in classroom activities is to facilitate teacher's talk in delivering material to students so that her students get more understanding and of course to promote effective classroom communication among classroom members (Lin et al., 2019; Shellayukti, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The present study sought answers to intended research questions that focus on how teacher and students interact face-to-face in the contextual learning approach and then how they implement the patterns of interaction and communication to the whole teaching and learning process. First, the interaction and communication between teachers and students took place dynamically at each stage of REACT (reflecting-engaging-activating-cooperating and transferring) with a balanced portion among teacher and students and vice versa so it is assumed that the CTL approach can be an alternative for other learning practices to provide a good experience in encouraging students to be active students to engage in all classroom activities in face-to-face meetings. Second, the IRF (initiation-response-feedback) interaction pattern also dominates the interaction during the learning process so that this can also be used by other teachers in their classroom practice to provide a similar pattern for effective learning communication.

In addition, despite the present study provides pedagogical implications, limitation and recommendations to further study which highlight students-centered activities in face-to-face learning post COVID-19 era are also offered. Other researchers or educators may apply this learning approach in contextual setting particularly mentioned instructional procedures in classroom activities since its

beneficial impact and alive classroom interaction among teachers and students, and students to other students. Despite of implications, the researchers only focused on the classroom documentary analysis though the dynamics of classroom interaction were influenced by many factors including teachers' preparation, teachers' belief on teaching young students, conducive learning atmospheres, and materials are being learnt. This indicates the future studies have greater opportunity to conduct similar issue of research in different point of view to cover some mentioned perspectives so that the findings would be implied in wider context. In addition to the research perspectives, other researchers who would conduct the intended research issue, it might be constructive insight to exert some data collection both quantitatively and qualitatively so each data spans to its different dimension of perspectives. Then, the study is only concerned on the mostly homogeneous participations of young students in Islamic educational background, the further research is recommended to urge research participants in wider context in regard to the ethnicity, age range, heterogeneity, and gender based so that the findings might useful to capturing Indonesian context.

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