

Students' Utterances in English Foreign Language Classes: A Case Study of Four Elementary Schools In Jakarta

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Abstract: In foreign language classes, including English class, teacher's and students' utterances play important role in classroom activity because they guide the activities and interactions during the lesson. Thus, by understanding the students' utterance that occurred during the lesson, teacher will be able to conduct the lesson more effectively since they know how well the students' understanding. The aim of this research is to acknowledge the relationship between the lesson given by the teacher and students utterances in the classroom. This research used quantitative methods to get the result related to its objective. The subjects of this research were the English language teachers and his/her students in four elementary schools in Jakarta. In collecting the data, this research used observation table to be filled in the class during teaching-learning activity in English Foreign Language class. Previous study by Davies (2011) about "Increasing students' L2 usage: An Analysis of Teacher Talk Time and Student Talk Time" was used as reference to make the observation scheme. The finding of this research showed that students' utterance in the form of *display responses* is the highest type or most common utterance that was used in the class.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Tantra (2014), 2013 curriculum was designed lately to minimize the drawbacks of the 2006 curriculum or School-Based Curriculum (SBC) by refining it with relevant competency, organizing the important materials, implementing students' active learning, providing contextual learning paradigm, designing the textbooks with content and process of learning, and administering authentic assessment to learning process and outcome. However, both 2006 Curriculum or SBC and 2013 Curriculum or K-2013 still made the same decision about English as a foreign language (EFL) in their curriculum.

In foreign language classes, including English classes, there are various interactions that can be identified during the class activity. The finding of a research done by Smart and Marshall (2013) indicated positive correlations between students' cognitive engagement and several aspects of classroom discourse, including communication patterns and classroom interactions. Dictionary of sociology defines that classroom interactions are behaviors of class interaction or social interaction in the classroom. This is in accordance with Tsui (2011) who refers classroom interactions as teacher-student interactions and student-student interaction in the classroom. Therefore, there are two types of interaction in the classroom: students' utterances and teacher's utterances.

There are some previous studies that tried to do the analysis of students' and teacher's utterances. There are Nelson and Kleeck (1987), Muhi, Mambu & Kristono (2009), and Davies (2011). Nelson and Kleeck (1987) conducted a research discussing the impact of the mother tongue in EFL classes, in which they mentioned that traditional teachers tend to dominate the interaction and it can control the classroom

interaction to avoid students' unpredictable responses. The finding of their study showed that the length of teacher utterances can limit students' knowledge in responses or lack in solving problem. Muhu, Mambu, and Kristono (2009) conducted a study in Indonesia by conducting an observation to gather the data about students' response and teacher questions in EFL classes. The result of their study showed that students' utterances that occur in the classroom can help the teacher evaluate the learners and revise the lessons. They further mentioned that good students' responses could help the teacher check and revise the lessons. The other study conducted by Davies (2011) in Japan using pre-test and post-test to get the data from the young learners and classroom teacher. The result of his study showed that the teacher's talk time can affect the teacher in producing the utterances in order to make the students understand the materials. In addition, the result is divided into three highest frequency of teachers' utterances and students' utterances.

According to Nunan and Lamb, as cited in Muhu, Mambu and Kristono (2009), students' utterances could help the teacher to check learners' understanding, to elicit information and also to control the classroom interactions. In addition, Morgan and Saxton, as cited in Muhu, Mambu and Kristono (2009) mentioned that teacher needs students' utterances as a guide to evaluate and revise the lessons. Those statements indicate that utterances can be a major problem if they are not going well in the classroom, such as the teacher's utterances cannot control the classroom or students' utterances do not give the teacher's feedback to check students' understanding.

Teacher's utterances are also important elements in the classroom interactions because the teachers' roles can create the atmosphere of the classroom that can affect the students' development. Hassan as cited in Muhu, Mambu and Kristono (2009) stated that teacher's utterances are made by the teacher for their students or learners in the classroom as the strategy to elicit students' talk in the classroom interactions. The utterances have a major purpose that is to guide the activity and the interactions in the classroom so that the students become more focused to the lessons. Teacher's utterances from Davies (2011) are divided into 15 forms. They are songs, count, display, referential, behavior, direction, clarify/ correct, response to L1, response to L2, answer own question, praise, courtesy, and the last is L1 explanation. Furthermore, Davies (2011) divided students' utterances into 9 forms. They are lost time, songs, counts, volunteer comments/ questions, repeat teacher voluntary, repeat teacher on request, display response, referential response, courtesy.

The interaction between students and teacher in the classroom is a way to know how good the students' knowledge is. Thus, it is essential to study the types of students' utterance and which ones of them are frequently identified in the classroom. Tsui as cited in Muhu, Mambu and Kristono (2009) stated that teacher's utterances have a great impact on students' utterances and teacher's utterances can control the limit of students' utterances. Furthermore, Suparno (2013) also stated that the teachers regularly initiate the interactions using verbal expressions and evaluate students' responses also by using verbal expressions, for example teacher mostly use utterances in a classroom to make the students understand the lesson better and accept the knowledge more effectively.

The aim of this study is to find out the types of students' utterances towards teacher's utterances and also their frequencies of their occurrences. This study is limited to the teaching of English in five different classes in 2nd and 3rd grade, in four different schools. They are Harapan Mulia Elementary School, Bellarminus Elementary School, Bunda Mulia Elementary School, and Pangudi Luhur Elementary School. The differences between the previous studies and the present study are the present study was conducted in Jakarta, did not use pre-test and post-test but only used observation to gather the data, and involved students and internship teachers of four different elementary schools. The significances of this study offer some important insights for the classroom teachers, internship teachers and also the students in the schools. Students' utterances can be an assessment of the ways the teacher teaches. Thus, it is

hoped that the finding of this study can contribute in helping teachers learn the purpose of the students' utterances and improve their ways of teaching in classroom.

RESEARCH METHOD

The subjects of this study were the students of the classes where the internship teachers were doing their practice teaching in 4 different schools: Harapan Mulia Elementary School, Bellarminus Elementary School, Bunda Mulia Elementary School, and Pangudi Luhur Elementary School. The data of this present study were the types and frequencies of students' utterances occurred in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. The utterances were taken in five sessions of teaching learning activities (45 minutes each) in four different schools in Jakarta where the internship teachers did the practice teaching.

This study used quantitative method and the instrument the researcher used in this present study was the observation scheme adapted from the scheme that Davies (2011) used in his study. In this present study, the observation scheme from Davies (2011) had been slightly modified. For example, the previous study of Davies (2011) occurred in Japan, so the utterances observation scheme related with the use of L1 used Japan language. However, the present study occurred in Jakarta, so the utterances observation scheme that was related with L1 used Indonesian language instead of Japan language.

The first step of data collection procedures that was done by the researcher was contacting and asking permission to the schools and internship teachers to record videos of their practicum teaching to conduct the research. The next step was identifying the students' utterances, and then categorizing the utterances after watching the videos. The last procedure was tabulating and analyzing the utterances. After tabulating the utterances, the researcher counted the frequencies that were grouped into the high frequent, middle frequent, and low frequent types. Those types were then ordered based on their frequencies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research adapted observation scheme from Davies (2011) in doing the observation about the types of students' utterances and students' utterances frequency in teaching-learning English as foreign language. After watching and transcribing the videos of each session in four different schools in Jakarta, it was found that there were various types of students' utterance occurred during those sessions. The utterances then were grouped into nine categories: lost time, song, count, volunteer comments or questions, repeat teacher voluntary, repeat teacher on request, display response, referential response, and courtesy. The distribution of the types and frequencies of students' utterances is shown in the following table.

Table1. Types and Frequencies of Student's Utterances

NO.	STUDENTS' UTTERANCES TYPES	THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS' UTTERANCE CASES					TOTAL
		VIDEO 1	VIDEO 2	VIDEO 3	VIDEO 4	VIDEO 5	
1.	LOST TIME Students were not speaking L2 or displaying non-acceptable behavior.	1	0	3	0	0	4
2.	SONG Singing by students.	1	0	0	0	0	1
3.	COUNT Counting by students.	0	0	0	0	0	0
4.	VOLUNTEER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS Comments or questions voluntary made or asked by students using L1 or L2.	1	1	11	2	0	15
5.	REPEAT TEACHER VOLUNTARY Utterances the students voluntary repeated the teacher utterances used L2.	0	0	0	0	0	0
6.	REPEAT TEACHER ON REQUEST The teacher utterances that the students repeated the utterances on demand used L2.	0	6	0	1	0	7
7.	DISPLAY RESPONSES Responses to display questions from teacher in L1 and L2.	32	4	9	11	33	89
8.	REFERENTIAL RESPONSE Responses to referential questions from the teacher in L1 and L2.	8	0	9	5	25	47
9.	COURTESY Courtesy from the students.	3	1	1	2	1	8
		46	12	33	21	59	
TOTAL		171					

As it can be seen from the data in Table 1, there are 171 cases of students' utterances in total. The data shows that there are 4 cases of *lost time*, 1 case of *songs*, 0 case of *count*, 15 cases of *volunteer comments or questions*, 0 case of *repeat teacher voluntary*, 7 cases of *repeat teacher on request*, 89 cases of *display responses*, 47 cases of *referential responses*, and then 8 cases of *courtesy*.

The first category is *lost time*. Lost time is the time when the students do not use L2 or display non-acceptable behavior in the class. Thus, this situation forces the teacher to correct students' words or to warn the students' behavior that not related with the lesson and it makes the teacher lose time to explain the material. The videos show that there are 4 cases of lost time.

Example:

(1) (A teacher showed a picture and asked the students to answer the picture it is about fiction or non-fiction)

T: "Okay, next picture."

T: "What picture is it?"

(Suddenly, all of the students want to answer their teacher question and they speak at the same time)

Ss 1: "The map, Miss."

Ss2: "Miss, who is painting your picture?"

Ss3: "There is a map, Miss."

Ss4: "Miss, I think someone is watching us behind."

Ss5: "Hahahaha"

Ss6: "Fiction, fiction, fiction."

Song is the second category. In this category, songs are considered as students' utterances when the students apply the songs as media to learn the lesson positively and it must be related with the lesson. In the present study, there is only 1 case of songs in the videos.

Example:

(2) (After teacher plays the song video for twice, a teacher asks the students to sing a song together)

T: "Okay, now let's sing together. Okay?"

Ss: "Okay, Miss."

T: "1, 2, 3 ..."

(A teacher plays the song and the students join the singing and below are the song they sing.)

Ss: "How's the weather? It's sunny."(3x)

"It's sunny today."

"How's the weather? It's rainy."(3x)

"It's rainy today."

"How's the weather? It's cloudy."(3x)

"It's cloudy today."

"How's the weather? It's windy."(3x)

"It's windy today."

"How's the weather? It's snowy."(3x)

"It's snowy today."

In the video, a teacher plays a song related with the subject material. The subject material is about "weather" and "season". In this situation, the students sing a song that related to the lesson and it is considered as "songs", because the students' sing a song together about the weather and season. It makes them understand what types of the weathers and the seasons they are learning.

The third category is *count*. Count in this case means that the students do the counting in turn or unison. In all of the videos, none of the students take turn to count or count unison while teaching and learning process. Therefore, none of the videos is classified as a case of the "count" category.

The fourth category is *volunteer comments or questions*. Comments or questions from the students that related to the lesson in teaching and learning process there are 16 cases of "volunteer comments or questions".

Examples:

(3) (After the teacher asks the students to sing a song together about the weather, and then the teacher explains the categorization of weather, after that teacher asked to the students about the weather outside.)

T: "So, what's the weather like today? Outside?"

(Students look at the outside and at the same time answer the questions from the teacher.)

Ss: "Sunny, Miss."

In the videos, while teaching and learning the internship teachers ask a lot of questions as forms to invite the students as volunteer to give comments or ask questions if the students do not completely understand to the lessons that the teacher explains. When the students voluntary give comments or questions to the teacher is considered as a "volunteer comments or questions", because the students give comments or questions as a volunteer to the teacher explanation and questions with purpose to add the students' knowledge.

The fifth category is *repeat the teacher voluntary*. Repeat teacher voluntary means that the students' voluntary repeat the L2 utterances from the teacher. This category is not found in the videos.

The sixth category is *repeat teacher on request*. Repeat teacher on request means the teacher utterances using L2 and the students repeat because the teacher demand. In this case, the purpose of the teacher's utterances is to correct students' utterances because sometimes students pronounce the wrong L2 utterances or students are confused and do not know how to pronounce the L2 utterances. However, to correct the students' utterances, a teacher needs to command the students to repeat the correct L2 utterances. There are 7 cases in the videos that are classified into this category.

Example:

(4) (A teacher taught the students about the kinds of story, while showing the students a picture.)

T: "What story is it?"

Ss: "Snow white."

T: "What kind of story is snow white?"

Ss: "An evil queen and a kind woman."

T: "No, I mean what kind of story is snow white? This story is about?"

(The students answer the question together and loudly, so the teacher cannot hear the right pronunciation of the answer.)

Ss: "Fairytale."

(The students pronunciation "*fairytale*" but it sounds like "*very tell*")

T: "What? About fairytale?"

Ss: "*Fairytale*."

(The students pronunciation still sounds the same like the first one "*very tell*")

T: "Once again, *fairytale*."

Ss: "*Fairytale*."

After the teacher explains about the explanation of fairy tales, teacher asks students how to pronounce "*fairy tales*", but there are some students who pronounce it not so clearly and it sounds like the students pronounce it "*very tell*". After that, the teacher gives the right example of how to pronounce "*fairy tales*" and asks students to repeat the teacher too pronounce "*fairy tales*" clearly. In this case, the teacher asks the students to repeat the utterances using L2 is consider as "repeat teacher on request" because teacher asks the students to repeat after the teachers' utterances using the L2 and the teacher checks and shows the right pronunciation of the "*fairy tales*".

The seventh category is *display responses*. The explanation of display responses is the response when the students produce an utterance compatible with what the teacher expects. Thus, the responses lead to the lesson and help the students to understand the materials. The first time before a teacher starts the lesson sometimes a teacher gives the students questions to answers as a clue, so the students can imagine about what lesson they will learn. There are 75 cases in the videos that classify into this category.

Examples:

(5) (In the videos, the class learns about fiction and non-fiction story and the teacher asks the students based on the picture that the teacher holds.)

T: "Do you know who he is?"

(The students take a look at the picture and answer based on the picture given by the teacher.)

Ss: "He is Mr. Soekarno, Miss"

(After that, teacher asks students' questions once again based on that clue.)

T: "Is Mr. Soekarno from a cartoon story or a real person?"

Ss: "He is a real person"

(Thus, the teacher directly links to the lesson with the picture.)

T: "So, his story is fiction or non-fiction?"

Ss: "Non-fiction, Miss."

It can be seen from the video transcript that when the students' answer the right questions and it is compatible with the teacher expected. It is considered a "display responses" because all of the students have similar answer to the question that the teacher gives based on the clue. In the other words, the teacher actually gives the students questions that already have the answers. The video shows that when the teacher asks who the person in the picture is, actually the students already know that he is Mr. Soekarno. Thus, the students answer the teacher question together that person in the picture is Mr. Soekarno. The students already know that Mr. Soekarno is a real person, so when the teacher asks the students whether the story of Mr. Soekarno is a fiction or non-fiction, the students already know that story of Mr. Soekarno must be a non-fiction story. Those examples show that the teacher gives the

questions to the students with clues which help the students to understand the materials easily.

The eighth category is *referential response*. In a teaching learning process, the teacher has a goal for the students get an achievement which is proven from the responses that the students' produce whether or not is referential to the lesson. Thus, referential responses are responses from the students that has to achieve the goals from the teacher questions in L1 or L2. In this case, the teacher gives the students questions to get the referential response. All of the videos have a referential response from the students and mostly are occurred at the end of the lessons. There are 37 cases in the videos that classified into this category.

Examples;

(6) (Before start the lesson, a teacher asks the students about the weather today.)

T: "Class, so how about the weather today?"

Ss: "Cloudy, Miss."

(The students give the referential responses to the teacher, answer about what they have learn that day.)

T: "So, do you like the weather?"

Ss: "Yes, Miss."

In the video transcript, it can be seen that when the students' answers the questions suitable with the goals and it is classify as "*referential responses*", because students could answer the teachers questions. In the video, it shows that when the teacher asks whether the students like the weather or not, the students immediately answer the teacher question. Thus, the teacher knows whether the students understand the lessons or not. It is a way for the teacher to know if the teacher reaches their goals.

The ninth category is *courtesy*. Courtesy is an action about respect that the students show during the teaching learning process. For example, when the students say "thank you", "ok", "may I?", and et cetera. The videos show that there are 8 cases that classify as a "courtesy".

Examples:

(7) (The situation in the class when the teacher distributes the reading passage to the students.)

T: "Okay, now we want to read a story and I will distribute these papers."

Ss: "Okay, Miss."

(The teacher only distributes to several students and asks them to pass it to their friends.)

T: "Please take one and pass it to your friends."

Ss: "Okay, Miss. Thank you."

In the videos, all of the students say "*thank you*" whenever the teacher distributes the reading passage to them. Moreover, the students answer and talk politely in the class while teaching and learning process. Hence, it is considered a "courtesy" because when the students receive an action from the other which are request for help or help them for something, suddenly the students express the polite words of "*thank you*" and "*okay*".

The frequencies are then divided into three categories: low, middle, and high frequencies, by looking at the total of the cases. It can be classified as high frequencies if the total of the case is above 75 cases and for middle frequencies the total case is from 74 until 4 cases. The least is low frequencies with the total case from 4 cases until 0 case. The categorizations are divided into three because it will help the teachers to be able to improve their teaching method based on the highest frequencies of students' utterances. The order of students' utterance frequency is shown in table below.

Table 2. The Order of Students' Utterance Frequency

NO.	STUDENTS' UTTERANCES TYPES	FREQUENCY
1.	DISPLAY RESPONSES Responses to display questions from teacher in L1 and L2.	89
2.	REFERENTIAL RESPONSE Responses to referential questions from the teacher in L1 and L2.	47
3.	VOLUNTEER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS Comments or questions voluntary made or asked by students using L1 or L2.	15
4.	COURTESY Courtesy from the students.	8
5.	REPEAT TEACHER ON REQUEST The teacher utterances that the students repeated the utterances on demand used L2.	7
6.	LOST TIME Students were not speak L2 or displaying non-acceptable behavior.	4
7.	SONG Singing by students.	1
8.	COUNT Counting by students.	0
9.	REPEAT TEACHER VOLUNTARY Utterances the students voluntary repeated the teacher utterances used L2.	0

It can be seen from the data that not all the utterances were used by the students. It shows that *counts* and *repeats teacher voluntary* had zero frequency. In this case, the student teachers did not use this type of utterance (zero frequency) probably because this type of utterance takes a lot of time. Students and teachers did not repeat or count, because they possibly believed that it would take more time in producing them and the utterances would not bring new ideas or meaningful messages for the students. Moreover, the class practices can substitute the individual practice in order to save time.

Display response happens when the students answer or response the teachers' questions using the information displayed by the teachers. *Display responses* is dominant type because it is much easier when students are given a clue from the teacher to give a response. Without a clue, the students hard to understand the lessons and students also feel the lessons are monotonous.

Students' utterance in the form of *display responses* is the highest type or most common used in the class because the internship teachers often used this type during the teaching process. They were 89 cases that occurred because the students were from Grade 2 and Grade 3. Thus, it will be helpful for the teacher if they give clues to the students before the lesson. Moreover, the teacher also needs to grab the students' attention with something attractive before they start the lesson such as flash cards or pictures. Pictures or flashcards make the process of giving questions more interesting and make the classroom situation lively. Thus, the class is not monotonous and ordering the questions becomes easy. This is in accordance with Morgan and Saxton, as cited in Muhu, Mambu & Kristono, (2009), who mentioned that it is a good way for a teacher to give the students an opportunity to give comments or answers to the questions in order to check the students' understanding. Furthermore, it also helpful in encouraging the students to be more active in class and in giving more comments or answers to the teacher's questions. In addition, Byod (2012) stated that talk in a dialogic classroom is essential and "the teacher plays a critical role in setting up an developing the sociohistorical patterns of classroom talk – the global and proximal antecedents for each utterance – to which students will respond. (p.30).

The data showed that *repeat teacher on request* and *repeat teacher voluntary* had a different result, although both of the utterances are repeat the teacher. When repeat teacher on request occurs, the teacher asks or orders the students to repeat the teacher utterances. In this case, the students are aware that they must repeat the teacher utterances. It is different from repeat teacher voluntary, when the teacher produces the utterances and the students suddenly repeat after the teacher without the teacher gives a sign to repeat the utterances. In the other words, repeat teacher voluntary is a part of lost time in students' utterances type because both of that type it makes the teacher has to stop the teaching and learning process to warn the students. The difference is lost time can be interpreted as a negative students' utterances type, whereas repeat teacher voluntary is interpreted as a positive one.

The findings of this study can help teachers in knowing students' absorption and understand students' needs which is in line with Gagne's theory of instruction that explained about teaching proses focusing on the result and behavior during learning using 9 events of instructions. Ngussa (2014) mentioned that the 9 events of instructions are gaining attention, informing learner of objectives, stimulating recall of prior learning, presenting stimulus material, providing learning guidance, eliciting performance, providing feedback, assessing performance and enhancing retention and transfer. Ngussa further stated that according to the theory, in eliciting performance by asking students and in presenting stimulus by using cards or pictures, teacher will be able to know how far students understand the topic they are learning.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the finding of this study, it can be concluded that from the teaching point of view, the teaching process frequencies of students' utterances were good since the frequency of lost time utterance was low. This result is in an accordance with Mercer (2012) who mentioned that teacher is expected to prioritize the quality of classroom conversation in order to produce a good quality of education. Furthermore, students' utterance in the form of display responses is the highest type or most common utterance that was used in the class because the internship teachers often used this type in teaching that was proven from the number of 89 cases. Thus, it is suggested that teachers are able to innovate their teaching techniques in order to build meaningful conversation with the students and prevent the monotonous learning process. It is also hoped that the suggestion will help the students to be more excited and pay more attention on the lesson given by the teacher.

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