

## DELVING INTO EAP TEACHERS' CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: CONSTRUCTION OR OBSTRUCTION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN EFL CONTEXT

Mowla Miri<sup>1</sup>, Zahra Qassemi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Candidate in TEFL, AllamehTabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

<sup>2</sup>MA in TEFL, Lorestan University, Khoramaabad, Iran

E-Mail: <sup>1</sup>molamiri84@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>lootos\_bar@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** *The present paper reports on a study examining how English for academic purposes (EAP) teachers' language use can contribute to opening up or obstructing learning opportunities for learners. In doing so, audio-tapes of a typical tutorial session of four EAP instructors, seven hours of recordings in total, were closely analyzed. Conversation analysis (CA) methodology was adopted to demonstrate how teachers' intended or inadvertent online decision-makings affected learners' participation. Results unfolded that extended teacher turn, limited wait-time, extensive repair, and teacher echo erected some obstacles in the way of learners' participation and consequently minimized interactional space. The results also evidenced that overriding practice around material texts as well as skill and system mode coupled with focus on display questions curbed the learners' active involvement in more dialogic discussions. Furthermore, it was evidenced that the teachers' over-reliance on L1 and translation could contribute to a less L2 exposure and communicative setting. Some implications for pertinent stakeholders and fertile grounds for further research are presented.*

**Key words:** *EAP teachers' behavior; talk; EFL classrooms; learning opportunities; students' participation; conversational analysis*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Classroom discourse as the context wherein knowledge is shared and shaped through classroom practice concentrates on teacher behavior and effectiveness of interaction. Walsh (2002) appropriately argued that whether teacher talk is of significant importance in learning, we need to promote our understanding of the relationship between talk, interaction and learning opportunities. He also remarked the impact of interactional features on space for learning, in which teachers can construct or obstruct learning opportunities through their use of language. Additionally, pedagogic goal of the moment and local surroundings can affect levels of interaction and learners' involvement (Walsh & Li, 2013); hence teachers' interactional decisions and use of language can vary based on classroom mode (Walsh, 2006, 2011). Walsh (2006) acknowledged that any classroom discourse analysis should consider changes of discourse and language use caused by pedagogic goal of the moment. He came up with four classroom modes: managerial mode, classroom context mode, skill and systems mode as well as materials mode. In the

managerial mode, the prime focus is on setting up an activity or giving instruction while in the classroom context mode, the aim is to elicit learners' personal ideas and attitudes. In skills and system mode, the focus is placed on particular language items or a skill; also in material mode, the main focus is on a piece of material such as a book or a text. Furthermore, teachers' use of language and the way they regulate classroom interaction via managing the turns and interactional practices (Walsh, 2002, 2006), extended learner turns and appropriate use of eliciting strategies can affect learning opportunities and learners' participation within classroom context. Likewise, limited wait-time (White & Lightbown, 1984; Yaqubi & Rokni, 2012), teacher echo and extended teacher turn have been the reported factors concerning teacher classroom talk that can afflict space for learning.

Less negative feedback with more focus on communication rather than accuracy and exposing interactants to various discourse types can result in a communicative context of learning compared with traditional one (Lightbown, 1993, as cited in Walsh 2006). Such communicative settings can maximize learners' participation, which in turn is likely to bring about second language acquisition (Walsh, 2002). In contrast to traditional approaches of classroom teaching in which passive learners were fed with teacher knowledge, today learners are said to be in charge of their own learning. It is approved that "meanings and actions are co-constructed through the interaction of the participants" (Walsh, 2006, p. 63), what Walsh (2006) well-defined as classroom interactional competence (CIC), i.e., "teachers' and learners' ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning" (Walsh, 2013, p. 132). Walsh went on to argue that a mutual understanding of CIC by teachers and learners can support learning.

More specifically, foreign-language classrooms as complex and multi-layered contexts have been said to need awareness and interactional competence (Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010; Walsh, 2006a), the interactants' ability to use language so as to co-build meaning (Young, 2008). Teachers as classroom decision-makers (e.g. Bailey, 1996; Scrivener, 1994) should be sensitized to both positive and negative impacts that teachers' online decision-making might have on learning opportunities (e.g., Ellis, 1998, as cited in Walsh, 2006); for example using referential questions rather than display questions frequently results in extended wait-time (Thornbury, 1996) which can increase students' response and also longer turns (Nunan, 1991) whereas limited wait-time tends to impede interactional space (Yaqubi & Rokni, 2012). Furthermore, 'explicit positive assessment', giving positive feedbacks like; 'excellent', 'very good', and 'perfect' to students' contribution, may serve as closings and impedes further talk "by implicating the latter as unnecessary and unwarranted" (Waring, 2008, p. 589) and also IRF exchanges (teacher initiation, students' response and teacher feedback), are typically considered as negative in language classroom since they present minimal interactional opportunity for learners; nevertheless, Van Lier (2000) argued the depth of processing and 'IRF continuum' are the features that determine contribution of IRF on learning. What is more, shaping learners' contribution (e.g., Jarvis & Robinson, 1997), and setting a flexible relationship between pedagogical goals and shape of interaction (Seedhouse, 2004) are of the teachers' responsibilities in classroom. Walsh (2002) pointed to a number of current features of contexts that confine its interactants use of language in EFL classrooms such as teachers' strict control over the topic of discussion as well as frequently adjust content and procedure, determine who speaks and when learners' participate, ask questions they already know the answers, excessive teacher talking time, and unequal role relationship between teachers and learners.

Regarding teaching and learning English language, Iran as an EFL context has its own demands and limitations. Atai and Thririan (2003) maintained that demotivating atmosphere, failure in learners' comprehension of texts and lack of adequate interaction between teachers and students are some dominant characteristics of Iranian higher education levels. By the same token, Hayati (2008) highlighted the teacher-centeredness of Iranian setting. In fact, teachers' devote most of their class time to overall interpretations of the texts while students' concern is not to miss writing every piece of translation of the text without participating in communicative practices. In such situation and taking into account the leading role of teachers who control most of classroom interactions, principally via the ways of closing or allowing learners' conversations (Johnson, 1995), teachers should gain a better vision of who they are and what they are responsible or assigned for (Varghese, Morgan, Johnson & Johnson. 2005). Additionally, they should be aware of how to manage their talk and harmonize their use of language with pedagogic goals of the moment and with developing their CIC; appropriate interactional decisions are made (Walsh, 2011) to handle a more successful interaction.

Classrooms as the place where learning is created and shared via talks and participants negotiation within social activities (Hall & Walsh, 2002) has been the target of conversation analysis (CA). Nowadays, CA is widely employed to investigate naturally occurring talk-in-interaction among classroom interactants, wherein as an analytic tool it is used to describe and examine accurately classroom language use (Walsh, 2011). It can demonstrate L2 learners' learning procedures through their utterances and show alterations in learning (Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010). To this, theoretical underpinnings of CA has been employed to grant us a closer look at occurrences of interactional organization- turn-taking, repair, and wait-time- in EFL academic setting and consequently to demonstrate specific interactional patterns that affect learners' involvement, contributions and learning opportunities in EAP context.

## 2. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Numerous empirical studies have examined classroom interaction via theoretical framework of CA (e.g., Daskin, 2014; Walsh, 2002, 2006, 2011, 2012; Walsh & O'Keeffe, 2010). Appraising teachers' ability to generate learning space as stamp of good teaching, Walsh and Li (2013) explored the way in which the teacher managed to create learning opportunities by means of specific practices like extended wait-time, increasing learners' turn and also through shaping learners' output in a constructive way via scaffolding and paraphrasing. It was found that all these practices could result in both qualitative and quantitative alteration in learners' involvement and learning space.

Vis-à-vis negative impact of teachers' specific practices on classroom interactions, Yaqubi and Rokni (2012) showed that teachers' unintended limited wait-time practice structures were likely to affect classroom participation and learning space in learners' part. Walsh (2002), adopting the conceptual underpinnings and principals of CA, reported on the impact of teacher talk on construction and obstruction of learning opportunities and learners' involvement in EFL context via analyzing audio-recordings of eight experienced EFL teachers classroom activity that contained teacher-learner interactions. Finally, he pointed to the need for developing teacher awareness of their classroom use of language aligned with immediate pedagogical purposes, then, not to 'fill in the gaps' cause it is likely to reduce learning opportunities. He also proposed promoting teachers'

awareness via zooming on in their classroom behavior through either audio- or video-recording of their own classroom communication to redress their verbal behavior and as the result more careful use of language. The aforementioned study by Walsh inspired us with the impetus to conduct a research on EFL university context where the impact of teachers' classroom use of language on students' participation as well as learning opportunities, to the best knowledge of the researchers, is far less explored. Additionally, there is an attempt to develop an emic perspective by including participants' interpretation of their talk and behavior via stimulated recall of the recorded actions to gain a bare vision of EAP teachers' existing level of awareness and understanding of interactional organization.

Considering the crucial importance of teachers with a developed CIC (Walsh, 2006, 2011, 2012; Seedhouse, 2008) that can contribute to more learning opportunities for students, Walsh (2011) suggested that teachers and learners need to gain a deeper understanding of CIC and the way it is gained, because it can both improve learning and "result in more engaged and dynamic interactions in classrooms" (p. 166). He underscores the very need of research in various contexts such as EAP settings to investigate interactants' degrees of competence in co-construction of meanings and learning space. Even with a good number of studies that have considered the relationship between classroom teachers' talk in interactions and L2 learning of various levels (e.g., Li & Walsh, 2010; Mackey, 2006; Seedhouse, 1996, 2004; Walsh, 2002, 2006; Yaqubi & Rokni, 2012) and other classroom interactional patterns that can affect learners' output such as IRF (initiation-response-feedback) exchange (Lee, 2007; Park, 2013; Warring, 2008, 2009) yet, more empirical studies in various contexts with different participants are needed to promote our understanding of classroom teaching and learning interactions (Walsh, 2012). To date, very few studies, if any, have addressed EAP teachers' use of language in foreign contexts. As a result, through the lens of classroom interaction, this study attempted to clarify EAP teachers' classroom behaviors to portray how inadvertent teachers' use of language and interactive decision-making tend to success or failure of learning opportunities for students within naturally-occurring classroom interaction.

To fulfill the objectives of the study, the following questions were raised:

1. How EAP teachers, via their use of language, maximize or minimize students' participation opportunities?
2. Which EAP teachers' behaviors obstruct or construct spaces for learning?

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Setting and participants

The data in this study is taken from a corpus sample of eighteen consecutive audio-taped sessions of nine EAP instructors used for a larger research project on EAP teachers' cognition and actual practices in reading comprehension of Iranian higher education context (an unpublished manuscript) in an academic semester of autumn 2013. A typical class session of four EAP instructors normally lasting for one hour and a half (N=7) were considered as representative of Iranian EFL academic classroom settings. The English classes run by the selected teachers who all were Ph.D. holders in different fields of study, were either general English or content-based at BA levels that ranged in size from 16 to 28 students. For the sake of preserving ethical values as well as fulfilling anonymity of participants (both teacher and students), all mentioned names used during the study are pseudonyms. The teacher participants' demographic information is presented in the following table.

Table 1 EAP teachers' demographic information

No	Pseudonyms	Gender	Academic major	Teaching English course	Number of students	Any special teaching and learning English experience	Years of teaching experience
1	T <sub>a</sub>	f	English translation	Specialized English of psychology	16	More than 7 years of teaching in Konkur preparation institutes	15 years
2	T <sub>b</sub>	m	English linguistics	General English	28	.....	15 years
3	T <sub>c</sub>	m	English literature	English literatures	19	.....	9 years
4	T <sub>d</sub>	m	Physical education	Specialized English of physical education	23	.....	7 years

#### 4. DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTATION

In order to enrich and thicken the required data, several data collection measures were utilized: observation field-notes, interviews as well as recorded audio-files of selected teacher participants; however, the prime focus was on analyzing the verbatim transcription of audio-recorded files. One routine session of all the participants was audio-recorded after having received their consent.

##### 4.1. Stimulated recall

Introspective measure (i.e. stimulated recall) is a valuable source of gathering classroom participants' perspective in which by playing audio or video tape of a particular participant, researchers can gain finely detailed interpretations of classroom recorded events from target participants' perspective (Mackey & Gass, 2005). To this, supporting the results and making available further details on teacher participants' perception through justifying classroom events, the participants were invited to take part in a one-to-one interview with the observer researcher.

Subsequently, they were asked to explain the rationale behind some of their classroom behaviors. To obtain further assurances about accuracy of the obtained data, to reduce the probability of misunderstanding and to help the participants detail their views without the threat of inabilities in L2, the interviews were held in Persian (participants' L1). Some episodes of audio-recorded classroom interaction that either learning opportunities were hindered or created by teachers' actions, were selected by the researchers then played back in a private session held with each of them. In fact, the teachers were asked to comment on some parts of their own audio-recordings. This type of teacher account of their talk and behavior could provide us with an emic perspective (Mackey & Gass, 2005); in other words, a form of insider perspective that reveals participants' accounts of their interactional online-decision makings, practices, and treating learners' contributions could be obtained.

#### 4.2. Conversation analysis

CA “the study of recorded, naturally occurring talk-in-interaction” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, p. 12), has been commonly used to investigate classroom interactions. Detailed and in-depth data from the heart of spoken interaction with focus on key features such as pauses, smiley voice, overlapping, turn taking and so forth (Heritage, 2004) are gained from interactants’ behavior in conversation through which a perfect understanding of ‘how conversations work’ can be accomplished (Wong & Waring, 2010). Some reasons for which actual interactions should be recorded and transcribed included: first, there are hardly any other ways to recover some particular features; secondly, transcription of dialogues and developing an analysis is facilitated through the capability of playing and replaying of recorded materials; then checking a specific analysis against the materials is possible through recording, and finally reconsidering a particular interaction with a new interest is possible just through recording (Pomerantz and Fehr, 1997, as cited in Wong & Waring, 2010, p. 4). A systematic observation and analysis of L2 classroom is required, to describe classroom interactions and to determine how much learning outcomes are realized (Huth, 2011). To this, the theoretical framework of CA was adopted to analyze EAP teachers’ online-decision makings that are likely to affect learners’ involvement and learning opportunities.

#### 4.3. Procedures

Informed consent was obtained from all participants for audio-recording as well as classroom observation by one of the researchers. Consequently, the observer researcher participated and recorded the routine classroom sessions of the present participants whilst filling observation checklists of each class. Four audio-taped files (about 7 hours) used for the present study were listened by the researchers several times and were transcribed verbatim. Moreover, the related field notes and stimulated recall interviews of the selected participants were used to promote the qualitative results to an emic and more holistic account of interactions as well as facilitating triangulation of data, yet the focus of the current study is on transcribed interactions. Consequently, some episodes of natural interaction were extracted to be scrutinized via CA methodology to disclose the socio-interactive indicators (Mondada & Pekarek-Doehler, 2004) and to provide us with a detailed description of EAP classroom spoken interaction. The next attempt was to determine which classroom micro-contexts were dominant or more popular in EFL contexts and to see how the flow of interaction is affected by the current mode. Finally, to increase the reliability of results and promote data analysis procedures, the gained data were shared and negotiated with a CA analyst to reach a common understanding via a data analyzing sessions held a few months after observations.

### 5. RESULTS

From among the pool of examples of teachers’ opening up or obstructing learning opportunities some episodes were selected. The following extract is included in order to illustrate an example of question-answering sequence over reading a text (material mode) in a general English course. Questions were posed by teacher wherein interactional organization and participations through patterns of questioning were highly managed by

him. The teacher selected the one who should read by naming him/her and finally assessed his/her performance via assigning them a grade or a check mark. During the following episodes, T stands for the teacher, S for a determined student, and SS is indicative of a collective response from the class.

### Extract 1

- 1 T<sub>b</sub> OK (.) continue:: Novinfard  
 2 = paragraph three  
 3 S<sub>1</sub> ( ) look very tempting (.)  
 4 T<sub>b</sub> LOOK very tempting↑  
 5 =why do we use an adjective here?  
 6 S<sub>1</sub> it is [after very.  
 7 T<sub>b</sub>[NO:: not very  
 8 =after very (.) an adverb is also possible  
 9 that's not very (0.2)  
 10 SS [look]  
 11 T<sub>b</sub> [Aha] look (.) of course ((writing on the board)) (0.2) it's  
 because of uh::  
 12 there are class of specific verbs=  
 13 after which (.) we must use adjectives (.) you look angry (.)  
 sad (.) nervous  
 14 = they are sensitive verbs  
 15 so we say (.) look very tempting  
 16 is there any question?  
 17 good (.) next

Inviting whole class thinking of the answer, the teacher asked a question in line 5, but the intention was not eliciting the students' personal meanings rather linguistic knowledge. Before posing the question, scaffolding was offered in the form of using a cluster of micro-interactional cues (i.e., prosodic features) by teacher in line 4, including rising intonation, exaggerated pitch and emphasis to direct class attention to the verb 'look' and to facilitate guessing the right answer. Subsequently, the reader student's endeavor to complete his turn in line 6 failed by immediate repair of his error. The teacher's echo in turn 10 confirmed students' contribution then followed by further teacher self-explanation seem to be of the teacher behavior to assure the knowledge transition. The teacher immediate feedback (turn 7, 11) and smoothing over students' output led to few learners' involvement in the following turns and as the result, less dialogic approach. Finally, by asking whether there were any questions, he attempted to open up further opportunities or to encourage learners to ask questions, yet no questions were raised. Owing to extended TTT, failure in students' attempts to complete his unfinished turn and limited wait-time (line 7, 10), less students' participation was noticed. The rapid pace of interaction was also verified via frequent numbers of overlapping (line, 6-8, 9-11), continuous teacher speech (line, 2, 5, 8, 12, 14) and dearth of long pauses. Such fast rhythm of interaction was later explained by T<sub>b</sub> as "time pressure to put an end to the present book in a limited number of sessions as well as the heavy load of information that should be presented during each lesson" (ASR). Practicing around material text was evident in this extract then as the interaction progress from turn 10 on teacher use of language

shifted to skill and system mode via explaining students of a particular class of verbs wherein the teacher endeavor was to construct a strong body of grammar knowledge in learners' part (ASR).

Although English was supposedly the medium of instruction, neither the teachers nor the students used it as the dominant language during interactions. The following episode is an example of the teacher addressing the students' problem with accurate pronunciation (all in L1) extracted from T<sub>b</sub> class while reading a portion of a text on specialized English for psychology. Teacher echo (i.e., teacher filling the silence), as another dominant classroom talk, was justified by the present teacher-participant as a way to amend the students' frequent errors on difficult sentences (ASR).

### Excerpt 2

- 13 S<sub>1</sub> This errors ((wrong pronunciation))  
 15 to er (.) ((She missed some words)) indicate that children are ac...  
 16 T<sub>a</sub> Acquiring  
 17 S<sub>1</sub> ac.. (.)  
 18 T<sub>a</sub> Acquiring (.) ACUIRING,  
 19 S<sub>1</sub> er (.) acquiring general rules (0.2) general rules about  
 20 their language and for (ehh:: ) a period ((wrong  
 pronunciation))  
 of time they er [over  
 21 T<sub>a</sub> [Over Generalize (.)  
 22 overgeneralize *yani ta'mim dadan*  
 23 (it means overgeneralize) = OVER GEneralize  
 24 *bacheha vaghti ghaedaro yad migiran ono*  
*overgeneralizesh mikonan-*  
 25 *mese go k miganesh goed* (while learning the rules children  
 26 overgeneralize them; for example, they say goed)  
 27 S<sub>1</sub> over (.) overgeneral:: eh hmm (0.3) generalize (.)  
 overgeneralize ((correct  
 pronunciation))=  
 28 the rules to the [err ex..  
 29 T<sub>a</sub> [*kheili mamanoon* (Thank you)  
 ((teacher reread the paragraph again))  
 30 This error (.) seem to indicate  
 31 = that children are acquiring general rules about their  
 language (.) a::nd (.)  
 32 for a period of time they overgeneralize the rules: to the  
 exceptions  
 33 *khob hala lotfan shoma tarjomash kon* (you yourself now  
 please  
 Translate it)  
 ((4 lines of translation by S<sub>1</sub> were omitted))  
 34 S<sub>1</sub> to hm (0.3) overgeneralize ((wrong pronunciation))  
 35 T<sub>a</sub> Overgeneralize



Though the pedagogic goal of the moment is to do reading comprehension task with having the students read aloud the text yet, the focus is on immediate repair of students' mispronunciations (turn 16, 18, 21) and shadowed by teacher filling in the gaps and offering the class further explanations. The student's frequent use of pause (line 15, 17, 19, 27 & 28) indicated her difficulty in linguistic form (i.e., mispronunciation of the words) that was successively, followed by immediate correction and finally (turn 29) teachers' expression of gratitude in Persian put an end to students' involvement. Excessive use of L1 is apparent within this sequence; the teacher inadvertently used it in expressing words of thanks. In this particular case, using L1 has nothing to do with students' comprehension or competence in English, but it is deemed to be of teachers' ritualized talk (i.e., teachers' regular assumption of learners' incompetency in English). Later on, she justified the dominant use of translation as the result of the difficulty level of text, which was above students' level of language proficiency. Although the reader student demonstrated uptake of correct pronunciation of the word after teacher-initiated repair in line 27, soon after translation of few lines is mispronounced again (line 34). This various performance showed by the student in different occasions can imply Seedhouses' (2004) emphasis on significance of contextual approach to repair and learning in which repetition of the word where the interaction is closely controlled by teacher cannot demonstrate uptake of the knowledge but using that item independently in a meaning and fluency context (i.e., wherein students' expression of personal meanings and feelings are elicited rather than linguistic knowledge) can more probably indicate uptake (Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010). In the coming turns (30-32), the teacher reads out again the parts that student had difficulty reading. A large number of teacher-initiated repairs and immediate corrections that were identified via multiple listening and transcription of the audio files were later stated mostly as "the best way of correction right on the spot" for the benefit of the whole class (ASR). The focus was on repair and translation of the text which finally led to less L2 exposure in the classroom setting. The following segment of interaction is a case in point with predominance of eliciting classic IRF exchange and lack of learners' long and complex turns due to teacher excessive talking time. The student is trying to answer one of post-reading comprehension question where his turn is broken up by the teacher.

### Extract 3

- 36 S<sub>1</sub> ( ) due to the body [massage]  
 37 T<sub>b</sub>[Mousavi] is wrong?  
 38 =According to English grammar you are wrong (.)  
 39 Mousavi WHY?  
 40 S<sub>1</sub> *bayad migoftam* [because of (I should say because of)  
 41 T<sub>b</sub> [no:: (.) what is the subject of the sentence?  
 42 S<sub>2</sub> we  
 43 T<sub>b</sub>very good=of course (.) we is the subject of the sentence  
 44 so we must focus what is the subject (.) action (.) and verb  
 45 and here the subject is we  
 46 so we have to (0.3)  
 47 we have to watch (.) the body massage  
 48 okay (.) next question (.) Tavakoli (.) continue

Virtually, the question-answering sequence followed students' knowledge of language (i.e., display question), was highly cared within this segment. As the most shared discourse pattern in L2 classrooms, IRF sequences resulted in more teachers' dominance where teacher regulates "who talks, when and about what" (Ellis, 2012, p. 111). The teacher attempted to elicit self-correction in turn 39 but facing the students' incompetency he addressed the class this time (turn 41). Second student's correct answer results in the teacher's positive feedback but his stressed acknowledgments lead to learners' collective silence. In the following turns, the teachers' use of designedly incomplete utterances (DIU) as a popular tool for eliciting students self-correcting their errors while oral activity in second language pedagogy (Koshik, 2002) is noticed (line 46) in which teacher invites the entire class to complete the turn succeeding by his deliberate silence. It is assumed that he wishes this DIU brings about more learners' involvement, but facing a collective silence makes him complete the turn by supplying the answer. Through students' silence, the current conversation is closed down wherein the teacher asks another student to read. Overlapping (line 37, 41) and lack of long pauses during the current episode again highlighted fast pace of interaction. During the next example, the teacher goes on to underscore the crucial importance of specialized vocabularies from the text via translation and repetition.

#### Excerpt 4

- 49 T<sub>D</sub> Strength (.) S.T.R.E.NG.T.H ((he spells loudly))  
 50 Strength (.) *be che maenast?* (0.3)  
 51 S<sub>1</sub> *ghodrat* (strength)  
 52 T<sub>D</sub> *Pas dar natijeto in jomle strength training mishe::* (.)  
 53 (so strength training in this sentence means::)  
 54 S<sub>1</sub> Ghodrate [er  
 55 S<sub>2</sub> [yani tamrine ghodrati  
 56 T<sub>D</sub> *bale doroste. tamrine ghodrati* (0.4)  
 57 ((writing on the board)) endurance (.) training  
 58 SS *tamrine steghamati*  
 59 T<sub>D</sub> *bale tamrine steghamati ke az kalamate klidie in dares*  
 (that's a  
 Key vocabulary of the present lesson)=  
 60 *edame bede lotfan* (continue please)  
 61 S<sub>1</sub> strength training for developing muscles ((wrong  
 pronunciation))  
 62 T<sub>D</sub> Muscles (0.3) repeat after me (.) MUSCLES  
 63 SS MUSCLES  
 64 T<sub>D</sub> muscles (.) *tarjomash?* (what's the translation)

Although, at the first look, there is a well-managed turn taking, acceptable learners' participation with no breakdown by teacher use of language as well as teacher cautious use of pauses throughout the interaction (e.g., lines 50, 56, 62) that tended to create space and time for rehearsal in learners' part, due to extensive use of display questions, teacher echo (turn 56, 59, 64), and translation the episode is likely to be of low value regarding effective interactional features. On majority of occasions, the teacher nominated a specific student to translate the text or respond the text questions (i.e. practice of

linguistic forms). Excessive reliance on translation where teacher clearly asks for L1 translation of the words (turn 50, 52 & 64) showed in this fragment was rationalized later by the present teacher to ensure even low proficient students' comprehension (ASR). He mentioned translation is mainly employed to provide all the students with an equal opportunity to get the thorough meaning. However, this teacher behavior unintentionally deprived them of involving in a L2 classroom interaction. In  $T_D$  case, he made extensive use of L1 either for translations or extra explanations, wherein almost all instruction and interactions but reading aloud of the text were in Persian. Excessive TTT and limited students' turn are succinctly captured in the following episode, in which teacher highly organizes the flow of interaction as in openings and closings of both subjects and sequences of turns.

## 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

To recap, the present study's challenge was to demonstrate rather than evaluate interactional practices and pedagogy, by describing how EAP teachers' talk and classroom behavior could affect students' participation and learning opportunities. To do so, CA of naturally-occurring classroom interaction of four EAP teachers was undertaken. Micro-contexts of occurrence of interaction modes (e.g., Seedhouse, 2004; Walsh, 2006) were also considered. The results manifested a domineering teacher talk and extensive use of L1 in which majority of instances of turn-taking, interactional organization (i.e., opening and closing of conversations) and repair were tightly initiated and controlled by teachers and in the cases of students' turns, their talk oriented to the teacher-assigned tasks around texts. Lack of some specific interactional features such as referential questions, learner-initiated interaction, content repair and extended wait-time as opposed to predominance of display questions, excessive teacher turn as well as extended repair on accuracy might demonstrate a ritualized teacher behavior with lack of competency or/and awareness of interactional competence. In brief, the current study presented a fine-grained CA of teacher classroom behavior in which based on documents, it can be claimed that EAP Iranian contexts are majorly teacher-fronted through which they tended to manage all learning stages, such as, topic management, turn-taking, repairing, mode shifting and terminating conversation. In condition, the students were deprived of learning space through multiple intended or inadvertent teacher classroom talk and decision making, such as turn completion, extensive teacher talking time and repairs, a more dialogic approach otherwise was passed unnoticed. Furthermore, dearth of classroom context mode to encourage learners' expressions of personal feelings and ideas but focusing on practice of linguistic forms as well as translation, can be regarded of the factors resulting in minimizing students' participation and consequently learning opportunities in Iranian EAP context.

The upshots of the study reiterates Hayati's (2008) assertion on ignoring the communicative aspect of language learning as well as lack of methodological knowledge in majority of EAP teachers in managing the courses more successfully. As the data corroborated, less amount of classroom interaction was devoted to the 'classroom context mode' that is a situation in which extended students' turns facilitate space allowing them to express themselves via oral interaction with minimal repair combined with content feedback as well as scaffolding (Walsh, 2003); nevertheless, in few cases of context

mode, interactions were handled all in L1 hence, communication was given scant attention by the classroom conductors. Moreover, in line with Ellis' (2003) statement on dominance of IRF pattern in EFL classroom discourse, a large number of feedbacks were identified almost in teacher initiated talk in a triadic exchange. Although in such sequences learners seem active interactants, it is highly argued that IRF exchanges are helpful in retrieving information but not in constructing knowledge or learning opportunities (Li, 2011). A large number of display questions in triadic patterns frequently did not lead in active learner involvement or negotiation of meaning but intended to test memorization or linguistic knowledge of students rather than to support a communicative context for eliciting learners contribution (as it happens in referential questions exchange with more content repair and not accuracy repair).

Regarding the importance of focus on quality of classroom discourse rather than quantity of it (Walsh, 2002), teachers and theoreticians are of great consensus on maximizing L2 exposure in classroom (Ellis, 2012) so as to enhance L2 interaction, to use target language and to decentralize translation which are assumed to be of highly assistance in raising learning opportunities as well as more engaged participations via more tasked-based interactive activities.

Based on the results of this study and in agreement with Day (1999) who underscored in-service education of teachers that in turn, can result in their cognitive growth, via micro-analysis of the data, it can be concluded that EAP teachers need to hone their abilities in pedagogical knowledge and interactional practices through appropriate teacher education interventions; that is, participating in language teacher education programs/workshops, receiving specific courses by teacher educators in particular or in collaboration with peer colleagues in general. Furthermore, promoting teachers' consciousness to regulate their talk between language used in class and pedagogical goals (Walsh, 2006) can bring about more competent teachers at CIC so that they can "promote dialogic, engaged learning environment in which learners feel safe to participate and take risks" (Walsh & Li, 2013. p. 16). EFL teachers are recommended to boost their CIC by raising critical reflection of their talk-in-interaction by implementing SETT framework (i.e., self-evaluation of teacher talk) in order to be more reflective practitioners (Walsh, 2011) or expanding consciousness of one's own classroom talk by engaging in self-observation and self-evaluation of their own talk via action-research (e.g., Warren-Price, 2003). Hence, deeper understanding of interactional processes (i.e., CIC) and how it can be gained is required to create further learning space and enhance learning both for teachers and students (Walsh, 2011) to this end; to have a more engaged and dynamic interaction educating both side of interaction on interactional competence is suggested.

Owing to importance of teacher online decision-making and its further probable effects on students and learning space, teachers' decisions should be intervened to be 'acquisition rich' (Ellis, 1998). Regarding teacher-initiated repair with teachers' strong preference for direct and immediate repair in which they repeatedly cut the flow of conversation, yet there is a scarcity of theoretical path or roadmap for teachers to follow (Ellis, 2012). They are recommended to redress their immediate reactions to students' errors by inviting peer students to repair ones' grammatical error (e.g., Edge, 1989) or in another words, other-initiated repair (Seedhouse, 2004), making opportunities for self-repair rather than teacher-initiated repair, selective repair (Li, 2011) and delayed repair, or to postpone overt correction just to the time when it blocks communication (Seedhouse, 2004).

Although critical reflective teaching and piloting self-observation concerns are beyond the scope of this research, we wish the results can blaze the trail for those who are intrigued by implementing critical pedagogy and rethinking of the quantity and quality of learners' contribution in their classrooms to generate critical interaction consciousness and engagements. Moreover, teacher educators who intend to enhance EAP teachers understanding of CIC to regulate their classroom interaction more thoughtfully. Finally, it is also hoped that the present study can be useful for prospective language teachers and academic material developers in establishing a prolific view through the lens of CIC in EAP setting. Some further fecund ground for further research can be, first, developing self-evaluation of teacher talk (SETT; according to Walsh, 2011) to explore the probable impact of raising their awareness of talk-in-interaction and second, mediating EAP teachers' through engaging them in a dynamic assessment procedure of CIC. It should be pointed out that the generalizability of the findings should be done with some caution since the number of participants was limited.

#### REFERENCES

- Atai, Mahmood Reza, and Tahririan M. H. Assessment of the status of ESP in the current Iranian higher educational system. Proceeding of LSP: Communication, culture and knowledge conference. *Guilford, England: University of Surrey, (2003).*
- Bailey, Kathleen M. "1 The best laid plans: teachers' in-class decisions to depart from their lesson plans Kathleen M. Bailey." *Voices from the language classroom: Qualitative research in second language education (1996): 15.*
- Can Daşkın, N. Shaping learner contributions in an EFL classroom: Implications for L2 classroom interactional competence. *Classroom Discourse (2004): 1–24.*
- Day, C. *Developing teachers: The challenges of lifelong learning.* London: Falmer Press.
- Edge, Julian. *Mistakes and correction.* Harlow,, UK: Longman, (1989).
- Ellis, Rod. Discourse control and the acquisition-rich classroom. In: *Learners and language learning*, ed. W. A. Renandya and G. M. Jacobs. Anthology Series 39. Singapore: SEAMO Regional Language Center. (1998).
- Ellis, Rod. *The study of second language acquisition.* Oxford University Press: NY. (2003).
- Ellis, Rod. *Language teaching research and language pedagogy.* John Wiley & Sons. (2012).
- Hall, J. K., & Walsh, M. 10. Teacher-student instruction and language learning. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, (2002): 22, 186-203.*
- Hayati, A. M. Teaching English for Special Purposes in Iran: Problems and Suggestions. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 7, no. 2 (2008): 149–164.*
- Heritage, John. "Conversation analysis and institutional talk." *Handbook of language and social interaction (2005): 103-147.*
- Hutchby, Ian, and Robin Wooffitt. *Conversation analysis.* Polity, 2008.
- Huth, Thorsten. "Conversation analysis and language classroom discourse." *Language and Linguistics Compass 5, no. 5 (2011): 297-309.*
- Jarvis, J. & Robinson, M. (1997). 'Analyzing educational discourse: An explanatory of teacher response and support to pupils' learning', *Applied Linguistics, 18 (2): 212–28.*

- Johnson, Karen E. *Understanding communication in second language classrooms*. Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Koshik, Irene. "Designedly incomplete utterances: A pedagogical practice for eliciting knowledge displays in error correction sequences." *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 35, no. 3 (2002): 277-309.
- Lee, Yo-An. "Third turn position in teacher talk: Contingency and the work of teaching." *Journal of Pragmatics* 39, no. 6 (2007): 1204-1230.
- Li, Li. "Obstacles and opportunities for developing thinking through interaction in language classrooms." *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 6, no. 3 (2011): 146-158.
- Mackey, Alison, Susan M. Gass. *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. (2005).
- Mondada, Lorenza, and Simona Pekarek Doehler. "Second language acquisition as situated practice: Task accomplishment in the French second language classroom." *The Modern Language Journal* 88, no. 4 (2004): 501-518.
- Mori, Junko, and Atsushi Hasegawa. "Doing being a foreign language learner in a classroom: Embodiment of cognitive states as social events." *IRAL-International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 47, no. 1 (2009): 65-94.
- Nunan, David. *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. Vol. 128. United Kingdom: Prentice hall, 1991.
- Park, Yujung. "The roles of third-turn repeats in two L2 classroom interactional contexts." *Applied linguistics* (2013): amt006.
- Seedhouse, Paul. "Classroom interaction: possibilities and impossibilities." *ELT Journal* 50, no. 1 (1996): 16-24.
- Seedhouse, Paul. "Conversation analysis methodology." *Language Learning* 54, no. S1 (2004): 1-54.
- Seedhouse, Paul. "Learning to talk the talk: Conversation analysis as a tool for induction of trainee teachers." *Professional encounters in TESOL* (2008): 42-57.
- Seedhouse, Paul, and Steve Walsh. Learning a second language through classroom interaction. In *Conceptualizing 'learning' in applied linguistics*, (Ed.), P. Seedhouse, S. Walsh, and C. Jenks, 127-46. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan. (2010).
- Sinclair, John McHardy, and Malcolm Coulthard. *Towards an analysis of discourse: The English used by teachers and pupils*. Oxford Univ Pr, 1975.
- Thornbury, Scott. "Teachers research teacher talk." *Elt Journal* 50, no. 4 (1996): 279-289.
- Varghese, Manka, Brian Morgan, Bill Johnston, and Kimberly A. Johnson. "Theorizing language teacher identity: Three perspectives and beyond." *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 4, no. 1 (2005): 21-44.
- Van Lier, Leo. *Interaction in the language curriculum*. London: Longman(1996).
- Van Lier, Leo. From input to affordance: social-interactive learning from an ecological perspective. In J. P. Lantolf (ed.). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2000): 245-59.
- Walsh, Steve. "Construction or obstruction: Teacher talk and learner involvement in the EFL classroom." *Language Teaching Research* 6, no. 1 (2002): 3-23.
- Walsh, Steve. "Developing interactional awareness in the second language classroom through teacher self-evaluation." *Language Awareness* 12, no. 2 (2003): 124-142.
- Walsh, Steve. Talking the talk of the TESOL classroom. *ELT Journal* (2006) 60: 133-41
- Walsh, Steve. *Investigating classroom discourse*. Routledge, 2006.
- Walsh, Steve. *Exploring classroom discourse: Language in action*. Taylor & Francis, 2011.

- Walsh, Steve, and Li Li. "Conversations as space for learning." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 23, no. 2 (2013): 247-266.
- Walsh, Steve, O'Keefe, A. and Morton, T. Analyzing university spoken interaction: A corpus linguistic/conversation analysis approach. *Interactional Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 16, no. 3 (2011): 325-345.
- Warren-Price, T. Action-Research: Investigating the Amount of Teacher Talk in My Classroom. Unpublished MA paper, University of Birmingham. (2003).
- Waring, Hansun Zhang. "Using explicit positive assessment in the language classroom: IRF, feedback, and learning opportunities." *The Modern Language Journal* 92, no. 4 (2008): 577-594.
- Waring, Hansun Zhang. "Moving out of IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback): A Single Case Analysis." *Language Learning* 59, no. 4 (2009): 796-824.
- White, Joanna, and Patsy M. Lightbrown. "Asking and Answering in ESL Classes." *Canadian Modern Language Review* 40, no. 2 (1984): 228-44.
- Wong, Jean, and Hansun Zhang Waring. *Conversation analysis and second language pedagogy: A guide for ESL/EFL teachers*. Routledge, 2010.
- Yaqubi, Baqer, and Mostafa Pourhaji Rokni. "Teachers' Limited Wait-Time Practice and Learners' Participation opportunities in EFL Classroom Interaction." *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning* 10 (2012): 127-160.
- Young, Richard F. *Language and interaction: An advanced resource book*. London/New York: Routledge. (2008).

## APPENDIX

**Adopted from from Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008)****Transcription key**

?	Question mark expresses slight rising intonation (and sometimes questions)
.	A dot shows slight falling intonation
,	A comma indicates continuing intonation
–	A dash indicates where speaker suddenly stop talking
::	Colon (s) means prolonging of sound and the number of colons says the length of the extension
↑	High pitch on the word
[ ]	Overlapping in speech
( )	Empty parentheses stands for inaudible talk
(hh, hm)	Audible exhalation of air
(.)	Micro-pause (0.2 second or less)
(0.4)	Numbers in parentheses demonstrate length of silence in tenths of a second
(word)	Words in parenthesis shows transcriptionist doubt
((nod))	Double parentheses demonstrate non-speech activity or transcriptionist comment
[utterance]	Utterances enclosed in brackets indicate that these utterance overlap with another Speakers' utterance
\$	Smiley expression of utterances
=	Equal sign shows continuing speech with no break in between
WORD	Capital letters shows loud speech
<u>Word</u>	Stress on that underlined part of the word
<u>Word</u>	The more underlings, the greater stress