

EXPLORING AN ONLINE ESL CLASSROOM INTERACTION: INVESTIGATING THE TEACHER-TALK AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL

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Teacher-talk plays a crucial role in classroom interaction since it facilitates L2 learner engagement among the ESL practitioner and the L2 learner. Considering this, it is essential to evaluate L2 classroom discourse in order to highlight parts of one's teaching methods and look at how language is used to achieve pedagogical objectives. This present qualitative study aimed to analyze the types of talks employed by the ESL practitioner in an online L2 classroom context using Walsh's (2006) Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework. The data were collected through Zoom video recording ability and observations from five naturalistic ESL classes and an interview with the same ESL practitioner who conducts lectures in one of the state universities of Sri Lanka. The results of the study showed that out of the 04 modes which were introduced by Walsh, the managerial and material modes were evident in the interaction. Even among these two, giving instructions was the most applied activity throughout all the teaching hours. Although the ESL practitioner used 10 of the 14 interactional characteristics from the SETT, it was evident that the ESL practitioner mostly controlled the ESL classroom throughout the learning process. However, it was found that due to the less to no participation of learners in the ESL classroom, the instructor had to take the dominant stance. Other findings of the study showed that Initiation-response-feedback (IRF) patterns, display questions, and classroom context hindered the learning opportunities. Thus, this study is expected to be used as a reference for ESL practitioners as a consideration for how to use teacher-talk along with interactional features that interest the L2 learners to contribute to the L2 learning process.

Keywords: ESL Classroom Interaction, Teacher Talk, SETT, L2 learners, Online ESL class

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