A STUDY ON INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES TO FOSTER TEACHER – STUDENT INTERACTION IN EFL TERTIARY READING COMPREHENSION CLASSES

Nguyen Thi Le Hang

Quang Binh University, 312 Ly Thương Kiet Str., Dong Hoi city, Quang Binh province, Viet Nam
Correspondence to **Nguyen Thi Le Hang** < hangnle.dhqb@gmail.com >

Abstract. This qualitative case study presents how –teacher-student interaction in EFL tertiary reading comprehension (RC) classes can be fostered with interactive activities (IAs). The purpose was to explore how IAs were deployed to improve the EFL tertiary students' reading comprehension skills; in other words, the study aimed at finding out the teacher talk as an interactive activity in teaching RC. Two female teachers who were currently teaching RC at a local university were the participants of this study. Data were collected through classroom observation with their teaching reading comprehension process. In addition, supporting data from audio-visual materials were used in the observation process. The data were deeply analyzed on the basis of the Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT) model by Brown (2001). Findings showed that all of 11 categories of teacher talk in FLINT appeared in the study. They were (1) *dealing with feelings*, (2) *praising and encouraging*, (3) *joking, (4) using ideas of students*, (5) *repeating students verbatim*, (6) *asking questions*, (7) *giving information, (8) correcting without rejection, (9) giving directions, (10) criticizing student behavior, and (11) criticizing student response* with different frequency. Furthermore, the study highlighted the potential value of considering teacher talk as an interactive activity since it was found meaningful to initiate the teacher–student interaction in RC class, and to foster students' RCskillsl.

Keywords: Teacher – Student Interaction, Interactive activities, reading comprehension, teacher talk, FLINT

I.   Introduction

In language teaching and learning in the EFL context, RC plays an important role in enhancing students' English ability as well as accessing information [13]. Furthermore, since it is considered a highly effective means of extending our command of language, reading is of importance in every language classroom, where language learning is the central purpose [13]. Students' reading abilities largely depend on language teachers' instruction by using IAs in the classroom [13], and language teachers are encouraged to use IAs to facilitate students' reading

comprehension [30]. Apart from their aids in understanding and comprehending written texts, IAs in RC classes also assist the students in accessing areas of knowledge and experience beyond their own particular areas of expertise and the teacher in examining how students' individual thought processes are working with the information received from texts [30].

Classroom is the place where teacher–student interaction is the most frequently and effectively fostered, and teacher talk is seen as the most influential element to make up the interaction between the teacher and his/her students in class. As stated by [15], teacher talk is important, not only for classroom management but also the process of acquisition in the classroom; therefore, it cannot be denied that in the process of language teaching, the teacher carries out specific communicative acts such as lecturing, asking and responding questions, explaining, and giving direction or instruction. These activities, which are mostly designated by the teacher, aim to facilitate students' performance in communicating with the teachers and other students in the classroom context.

Since classroom interaction is important and indispensable in foreign language teaching and learning, different interactional analysis systems consisting of a set of categories describing the activities of the teachers and the students in the class were designed by different researchers. Flanders' (1970) Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS) or Moskowitz's (1971) Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT) model are the two frameworks that have been used by a lot of researchers in the field. However, while FIACS can be applied to all the subjects taught in the classrooms and has been widely used by researchers in analyzing the system of interaction to study the happenings in a classroom when a teacher teaches, FLINT is particularly used in English Language Teaching. Therefore, [2, p.170] adapted FIACS and FLINT to design his own framework to analyze foreign language classroom interaction. In the present study, this FLINT System grounded on Moskowitz's framework is used to investigate the verbal IAs initiated by the teacher in EFL reading comprehension class. The focus is on the teacher talk as a type of IAs in the actual reading classes to see if the activities can make the reading class as interactive and effective as expected, and if they can foster the students' RC skills.

II.   A review of related literature

2.1.   As in language teaching and learning

In language teaching and learning, IAs provide opportunities for learners to use the target language in a communicative way for meaningful activities. They require learners' participation and involvement and provide opportunities to produce the target language to

become effective communicators. IAs make the students really use the language (Swain, 1985, cited by [8]). This idea is supported by [10] saying that promoting IAs seems to be an alternative means to help second language learners to acquire the target language in a meaningful way. As stated by [21], classroom IAs can be activities involving the participation of both teachers and students in class. For example, the teacher interacts with the whole class; the teacher interacts with a group, a pair or an individual learner. Learners interact with each other: in pairs, in groups, as individuals or as a class and learners work with materials and attempt the task once again individually, in groups or so on. Teaching is an interactiveactivityt, and interaction is achieved through activities or utterances produced by lecturers and students in the teaching and learning process [21].

2.2   As– An interactional tool in EFL reading class

In an EFL reading class, the term "interactive" seems to attract the attention of researchers worldwide since they have tried to search for an active and interpretive approach to reading which used to be thought of as a receptive subject [6]. From the interactional angle, reading is a process in which a reader with a purpose in mind interacts with the text through a certain activity, extracting meanings for the purpose of comprehension. [22] agrees that reading is an interactive process because readers constantly form hypotheses, test predictions, and use their knowledge to construct meaning. Reading is, therefore, viewed as an interactive process between a reader and a text and the purposes for reading in which learners are involved in processing, constructing texts, and elaborating its meaning to enhance comprehension.

According to [21], teaching reading is a more complex task since the process of reading can be done internally and individually. Seeing the quiet seems to be the indicator of learning taking place, which means that the reading classes are often individually assigned [21]. The cognitive perspective views reading as an individual activity, and what happens in reading activities can take place inside the reader. In contrast, the sociocultural perspective views that although this is an individual task, it does not mean it excludes interaction with others. This viewpoint regards reading as interactive both internally and externally. While the internal factor emphasizes the students' language competence and their internal reading ability, the external factor directs its focus on the teachers' interference and performance to the student's reading ability, such as teaching methods, teaching materials, the content of reading lessons, and the potential application of the learned knowledge in daily life. These two factors of interaction can foster or hinder learners' reading comprehension performance ([23].

It is undeniablethat in the current trend of language teaching and learning in general and in teaching reading in particular, IAs in classroom settings seems to be preferable because it suits the needs of students with different levels, from the beginner to the advanced. Besides,

although it is not as perfected as expected, it is applicable in explaining, instructing or fostering EFL students to read the texts with the most excitement and effectiveness. The IAs are, therefore, worth being applied in reading classes [21]. As identified by [11] and [26], classroom interaction is of great importance since it helps the teacher allow his/her learners to interact and express their ideas as well as guide them to become more reciprocal. Furthermore, it is considered to be essential for teachers to manage their classes and the activities they set for their students in the lessons. For the sake of creating an interactive readingthe class, classroom is seen as a social environment where interactional patterns can take place, and each type of classroom interaction presents different opportunities for interaction according to the participants' abilities to interact and negotiate meaning [24]. Classroom interaction is of great importance to change the role of the teachers and the learners in language classes in general and in reading comprehension classes in particular. Without classroom interaction, the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process cannot be fully obtained. Since interaction plays an important role in foreign language learning, the teacher not only focuses on the acquisition of the linguistics skill and accuracy but the interactional process as well. Therefore, in order to create an interactional reading classroom, teacher talk as a type of IAs is seen as the most appropriate way to engage the studentsino the lesson and encourage an active and creative style to their learning.

2.3. *Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT) System.*

Considering the importance of classroom interaction, an interaction analysis system is needed to measure the interaction which occurs during the teaching and learning process. Developed by Gertrude Moskowitz in 1971, FLINT System attracts the researchers' attention because it has complete categories and is specifically used for analyzing foreign language classroom interaction. Moreover, [2, p. 177] states that this model is helpful in developing interactive language teaching. First, it gives the teacher a taxonomy for observing other teachers. Secondly, it provides a framework for evaluating and improving one's teaching, such as how well-balanced teacher talk and student talk is. Thirdly, the FLINT model, especially the first seven categories, helps to set a learning climate for interactive teaching.

In order to operationalize the study, the specific items of the FLINT framework regarding the teacher's acts should be taken into account, as follows:

Table 1. Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT) System
(adapted from [14])

TEACHER TALK	**INDIRECT INFLUENCE**	1. Deals with feelings: In a non-threatening way, accepting, discussing, referring to, or communicating an understanding of past, present, or future feelings of students.
		2. Praises or encourages: Praising, complimenting, and telling students why what they have said or done is valued. Encouraging students to continue, trying to give them confidence, and confirming that answers are correct.
		2a. Jokes: Intentional joking, kidding, making puns, attempting to be humorous, providing the joking is not at anyone's expense. (Unintentional humor is not included in this category.)
		3. Uses ideas of students: Clarifying, using, interpreting, and summarizing the ideas of students. The ideas must be rephrased by the teacher but still be recognized as being student contributions.
		3a. Repeats student response verbatim: Repeating the exact words of students after they participate.
		4. Asks questions: Asking questions to which the answer is anticipated. (Rhetorical questions are NOT included in this category.)
	DIRECT INFLUENCE	5. Gives information: Giving information, facts, own opinion, or ideas: lecturing or asking rhetorical questions.
		5a. Corrects without rejection: Telling students who have made a mistake the correct response without using words or intonations which communicate criticism.
		6. Gives directions: Giving directions, requests, or commands that students are expected to follow; directing various drills; facilitating whole-class and small-group activity.
		7. Criticizes student behavior: Rejecting the behavior of students; trying to change the non-acceptable behavior; communicating anger, displeasure, annoyance, dissatisfaction with what students are doing.
		7a. Criticizes student response: Telling the student his or her response is not correct or acceptable and communicating criticism, displeasure, annoyance, rejection by words or intonation.

In the FLINT system, teacher talk is divided into two types which consist of indirect influence and direct influence. Indirect influence relatively occurs when students become the center of learning. In this situation, teachers tend to scaffold the learning process by following the students' interaction. Meanwhile, direct influence frequently happens when teachers become the center of learning. It generally occurs when the students' participation is less, so it makes teachers more aggressive and proactive. Consequently, teachers prefer to lead learning activities and initiate the interaction process to appeal students' confidence.

For the purpose of an interactive reading class as intended in the present study, the classroom interactional analysis system proposed by [2] (adapted from [14]) was used as the theoretical framework. To be more precise, the term "interactive" in the present study is understood as what the teacher talk in reading class to set up activities for the students to participate in the reading lesson interactively and control the process of students' engagement to make the reading classroom as interactive as possible.

2. 4. *Teacher Talk*

One of the central features to talk about in classroom communication and interaction is teacher talk. A lot of researchers agree without any doubt that teacher talk plays a very important role in the process of teaching of language in terms of both classroom management and acquisition [15]. As [17 p.189], cited in [9] asserts, "Teacher talk is of crucial importance, not only for the organization of the classroom but also for the processes of acquisition. It is important for the organization and management of the classroom because it is through language that teachers either succeed or fail in implementing their teaching plans. In terms of the acquisition, teacher talk is important because it is probably the major source of comprehensible target language input the learner is likely to receive".

In his/her teaching, a teacher carries out specific communicative acts to interact with the students such as lecturing, asking and responding to questions, explaining, giving direction or instruction, and giving evaluation to the students' responses. In this situation, the teacher not only plays the role of a controller, or a dominant figure in the classroom but also takes responsibility for motivating and arousing students' interest in the topics [7]. This finding is in line with [20] viewpoint indicating that teacher talk is really important since it can direct the students' attention toward the teacher's teaching focus.

A study by [19] stated that giving direction and lecturing are two strategies most frequently used by the teacher to lead the flow of interaction. Moreover, many display questions given by the teacher have motivated the students to give their responses in classroom. In accordance with the previous studies, a study conducted by [23] revealed

that teacher talks in asking question category dominated in the classroom, the teacher asked and the students responded to them wellby speaking eagerly, which means it is beneficial to the students.

The previous studies focusing on the types of teacher talks and student talk using FIAC (Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories) have shown the positive effects of teacher talks in classroom interaction ([11], [16], [19]). However, in this study, the researcher analyzed the teacher talks as IAs using FLINT (Foreign Language Interaction) analysis model ([2], adapted from [14]) as the theoretical framework. In this analysis system, teacher talk is divided into two categories namely *Indirect Influence* and *Direct Influence* with seven sub-catergories, i.e. (1) dealing with feelings, (2) praising or encouraging, (3) using ideas of students, (4) asking questions, (5) giving information and correcting without rejection, (6) giving direction, and (7) criticizing students' responses and behavior. As identified by [28], indirect influence "relatively occurs when students become the enter of learning", meanwhile, direct influence "frequently happened when teachers become the center of learning" (p.332). While in the former, teachers tend to scaffold the learning process by following the students' interaction, in the latter, the teachers tend to be more aggressive and proactive due to the fact that the students' participation is less. Consequently, teachers prefer to lead learning activities and initiate the interaction process more to appeal students' confidence. As confirmed by [2], the most important key to create an interactive language classroom is the initiation of interaction by the teacher. It is the teacher that promotes motivation in different stages of the teaching - learning process, from the beginning to the end of the lesson.

Apparently, the teacher talk is not only very important in teaching and affects the student's acquisition but also is an indispensable part of foreign language teaching in organizing IAs, and the way teachers talk not only determines how well they make their lecture but also guarantees how well students will learn. Through the teacher talk, the teacher can realize his role and what he is going to do. More importantly, the interaction between the teacher and his/her students plays a most important part in all IAs in a language classroom. Appropriate teacher talk makes a very positive contribution to creating a harmonious atmosphere and promoting a more friendly relationship between teachers and students, which creates more opportunities for teacher–student interaction.

III.   Methodology

This research used a qualitative case study approach to investigate teachers' talk in deploying IAs to facilitate EFL students' involvement in their RC activities. A qualitative design was chosen in order to explore and understand the social phenomenon ([4.p. 22]. The strategy

applied was a case study since it explored in depth activity in one or more individuals ([5, p. 30].

The Research Context

The study was conducted at a local university in Vietnam where the EFL teachers took over their teaching duties for English-majored students, and reading is one of the compulsory subjects to be taught. The students' background knowledge of the English language is not good enough even though English is one of their core subjects at high school. It is understandable because most of them come from rural areas where socio-economic development is still at low level, and their focus on the English language is not sufficient enough.

Participants

The participants of this research were selected on the basis of the researcher's judgment by using purposive sampling. In this study, two female teachers of English from the Division of English, Faculty of Foreign Languages of a local university in the central part of Vietnam were chosen as the participants. They were between 32 and 34 years old and had more than 10 year experience in teaching English to EFL students. In this research, names of the participants were pseudonyms in order to keep the participants confidential and make them feel comfortable when cooperating with the researcher.

Instruments

This research was employed as a qualitative study primarily exploring the teacher talk as IAs deployed in the teaching of RC to enhance EFL students' reading ability. Classroom observation was the main instrument used to collect data for the present case study. Firstly, classroom observation is considered the most appropriate instrument to help the researcher investigate the actual event by probing a particular subject n a real situation [29]. Accordingly, each of classroom observation was done in 50 minutes (the assigned time for a period of a reading class), and five periods were observed. In addition, audio recording was also used to assist the researcher in keeping the flow of classroom activities fully, systematically and objectively. The data were then analyzed qualitatively through interactive models from [12] with three main steps, i.e. (1) data condensation, (2) data display, and (3) drawing and verifying conclusion. To help with calculation, a simple detailed formula proposed by [3] was employed.

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \ x \ 100\%$$

(P: % of the category to be calculated; f: Frequency of the category to be calculated; N: number of teacher talk (as IAs in reading classes).

During the observation, the researcher sat at the back of the class to observe and record the participant's teaching with audio recorder and took notes on the observation sheet without any participation in the lesson. After finishing the observational task, all of the details observed were transcribed and calculated by the formula above.

IV.   Findings and discussion

The findings of teacher talk as IAs in EFL reading classes from direct observation and the audio recordings were calculated in the form of percentages grounded on Brown's FLINT system. Through five observations of T1 and T2 (50 minutes/period) in English reading classes that had been conducted, it was found that most of the categories in teacher talk had been deployed as IAs in these reading classes. In particular, most of the utterances included in teacher talks' categories occurred in all T1's and T2's classes with different percentages of occurrence: *dealing with feeling (7.1% and 8.1%), praising and encouraging (21.4% and 22.6%), joking (1.9% and 1.1%), using ideas of students (5.2% and 9.9), repeating students verbatim (11%), asking questions (7.1% and 8.7%), giving information (13.6% and 14.5%), correcting without rejection (3.9% and 5.2%), giving direction (20.1% and 17.4%), criticizing students' behavior (1.3 and 0.6%%),* and *criticizing students' response (0.6%).* Among the 11 categories, "*praising and encouraging*" and "*giving direction*" were two mostly used by the teacher, and "*criticizing student's response*" was the least dominant category of all.

Table 2: The Frequency of Teacher Talk as IAs in RC Classes

No	Categories	Occurrences		Percentage (%)		Ranking	
		T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2
1	Deal with feeling	11	14	7.1	8.1	5	7
2	Praising and encouraging	33	39	**21.4**	**22.6**	**1**	**1**
3	Joking	3	2	1.9	1.1	8	9
4	Using ideas of students	18	17	5.2	9.9	6	5
5	Repeating students' response verbatim	17	19	11	11	4	4
6	Asking questions	11	15	7.1	8.7	5	6
7	Giving information	21	25	13.6	14.5	3	3
8	Correcting without rejection	6	9	3.9	5.2	7	8
9	Giving direction	31	30	20.1	17.4	2	2
10	Criticizing students'	2	1	1.3	**0.6**	9	10

	behavior						
11	Criticizing students' response	1	1	0 .6	0.6	10	10
	Total	**154**	**172**	**100%**	**100%**		

Praising and Encouraging

This category ranked first among 11 categories since it was considered a powerful motivation for students' contribution. In fact, praising and encouraging were important in EFL teaching and learning in general and in reading comprehension in particular since they affected the classroom interaction between the teacher and the students. The effective teacher praise consists of two elements; a description of student academic performance or general behavior and a signal of teacher's approval [2]. These two elements are interrelated, since praising what the students have said or done, the teachers not only supported their students' learning but created an interactive atmosphere in the class as well. As found in the observed reading classes, the teachers praised the students' answers by saying *"very good"* or "*excellent*" which aimed to appreciate the students' answers on the general behavior; it made the students feel more motivated in their learning process. Moreover, when the teachers said *"Well-done!! All of you can answer my questions"*, they wanted to tell the students that they performed very well, and they felt very happy when all of their students could answer the questions correctly.

Giving directions

With the total percentage of occurrence, 20.1% (T1) and 17.4% (T2), giving direction appeared as the second most dominant activity deployed by the observed teachers. From the data collected, it can be drawn out that in order to maintain the activities in reading class, the students should be involved in participating in all learning activities. The data from classroom observation showed that in the reading lesson, the teachers intentionally gave directions to their students to follow, as in Extract 1 and 2:

Extract 1:   *T1. The whole class, please form a group of four. Every student in your group will take turn to write down the answer on the blackboard.*

Extract 2:   *T1. Now you compare your answer with other groups and tell me if there are any differences!*

It is indicated from the data that with different ways of expressing, giving directions is an interactive activity that is commonly deployed in EFL observed reading class. Instructions, guidance, command, order, or request initiated by the teacher are of great importance in leading the student to get the right answers to the comprehension questions in the reading texts. This result is in line with [16] findings which stated that giving direction should be frequently deployed since learning a foreign language definitely required more instructions,

guidance and commands to control the learning process and lead it to the most effective outcomes.

Giving information

As can be seen from Table 2, "Giving information" ranks third out of 11 categories with 13.6% of the total occurrence. This category is seen as the teacher's effort in transferring the information or knowledge related to the reading text to the students. In other words, it is employed to deliver material, information and knowledge to the students based on the objective of the lesson. For example:

Extract 3:

> *T1. Today we are going to learn a reading passage entitled "A trip to the beach". This passage belongs to the recount text. This kind of text often tells you about your personal experience in the past to your friends, your relatives, or who else that you know.*

Extract 4:   *T2. In today lesson, we are talking about "Global warming". It is a narrative text whose plots are related to cause and effect, and the authors relate ideas they want to express about how people behave and what they believe.*

At the beginning of the lesson, the observed teachers provided their students with some useful information about the kind of text they were going to read. This activities aimed at building students' insight about a kind among different kinds of reading text that they should know. Furthermore, it created an interactive atmosphere right from the beginning of the reading class, which helped both the teacher and the students feel at ease before they had to deal with a rather difficult reading text.

Repeating Student's response verbatim

From the data in Table 2, repeating students' response verbatim also ranked fourth with 11% of the total occurrence. This result finding showed the opposition to the traditional viewpoint which viewed reading as a receptive skill and the students were passive listeners has not been completely true in this case. Instead, the students were very active to give their responses to the teacher's questions during the learning process, and their precise and accurate responses were repeated by the teacher.

Extract 5 (T1):

> *T. The whole class, what can you see from the photo?*
>
> *Ss. The beach with a lot of people.*
>
> *T. Yes, that's right. The beach with a lot of people.*

Extract 6 (T2)

> T. Now, the whole class, read passage 2 again and answer my question: "What causes of global warming are mentioned in the passage?"
>
> Ss. Greenhouse gas emission from factories and vehicles.
>
> T. Yeah, Emission of greenhouse gas from factories and vehicles. What else?
>
> Ss. Overuse of chemical emissions and deforestation.
>
> T. Good job. Chemical emissions and deforestation are also the causes.

That the teachers tried to repeat the students' responses completely without any changes showed that the students could give the correct answers and the teachers should use it to reconfirm the answer and praise students for what they shared. By doing such activities, the teachers aimed to appreciate the students' interactions, which made them more engaged and active to give their responses to the next questions.

Deal with feeling & Asking questions

"Dealing with feeling" ranked in the 5th position together with "Asking questions" category according to the data collected from classroom observation of T1. In this reading class, the teacher seemed to be aware, understand students' problems, and shared the same feeling with the students. The understanding from the teacher and the right ways to deal with the student's feeling could be more encouraging and help students be more creative and enthusiastic in joining the class and make it more interactive. In this situation, "Deal with students' feelings" category was deployed as it is essential to strengthen the relationship between a teacher and students and also to break the ice of the students' nervousness in the reading class.

Extract 7 (T1):

> (Teacher asked the monitor):
>
> T. Hi L., who is absent this morning?
>
> L(monitor).: Nobody, Ms.
>
> T. Very good, it seems that you like learning reading skill with me.

Extract 8 (T2):

> T. Monitor, who is absent today?
>
> S (monitor): One, Phuong (is absent) with her sick note.
>
> T. Ok, One student is absent with permission. Now, we start our new lesson.

Before starting the lesson in the pre-teaching activity the teachers asked the monitor about the students' attendance to check if someone was absent from that lesson with or without

proper excuses. By doing so, the teachers could notice the number of students present in her class. Besides, this type of friendly exchange made the classroom environment more natural and comfortable.

Regarding "Asking question" category, in language teaching and learning, it is one of the teacher's ways to make students participate actively in teaching and learning process, and it is also a common way to make classes interactive.

Extract 9 (T1)

> *T: "What happened with our environment nowadays?"*
>
> *S: "Polluted"*
>
> *T: "Why is it like that?"*
>
> *S: "Because people throw out the garbage"*
>
> *T: "Right, because people throw out the garbage"*

In this reading class, utterances occurred when the teacher opened the question for the students to answer in the while-reading activity. Its aim was to get information, to confirm or to clarify the students' comprehension about the given reading topic. As stated by [24], asking questions aimed to "stimulate and initiate students' interaction to participate in the lesson", therefore, the teacher in this study tended to use different types of questions with high frequency so as to get the students' involvement in her lessons.

Using students' ideas

Using the ideas of students in reading class was also one way to encourage the students to be more confident and to show them that their ideas are valuable, which occupied 5.2% and 9.9% by T1 and T2 respectively. In such observations, we found that the teachers paid their attention to the students' contribution in different ways such as repeating the part of students says, modifying the students' ideas, comparing the student's ideas, summarizing what students described, and reaching the conclusion before moving to the next step. The teachers helped the students to gain their goal of comprehension and intellectual identity by respecting their minds and ideas and encourage their independent thinking. The utterances below showed the teacher's utterances in using the ideas of students.

Extract 10 (T1)

> *S: "Sorry teacher, could you turn back to the previous slide. I am writing."*
>
> *T: "Ok. I will repeat the definition once again."*

Extract 11 (T2)

> *T. Do you agree with Hien's idea?*

S. Yes, but I think people's awareness should be a possible solution.

T. Yeah, I agree. People should raise their awareness in protecting their living environment.

In this case, using ideas of students was one of the categories to make the teacher-student interaction clearer. According to Brown (2007) teacher's attention to student's contribution is a great appreciation for students' works. Clarifying, using, interpreting or summarizing the ideas of students are some ways of expressing the appreciation. The teacher and the students can start a discussion grounding on student's ideas. By rephrasing the student's ideas, the teachers could not only catch up with what the students but recognized as students' contribution as well.

Joking

Occupying 1.9% (T1) and 1.1% (T2) in the total of teacher talk occurrence, joking was proved not to be left out or ignored during the teaching-learning process. By making intentional joking, the teacher succeeded in creating a pleasant and safe place for the students to participate in.

Extract 12 (T1)

T. The monitor, who is absent this morning?

S. Nobody, Ms.

T. It seems that you are eager to see me, is that right?

S. oh yes, Ms.

This joking activity right at the beginning of the reading lesson was regarded as a source of joyful moment for both teacher and students to eagerly take part in different stages of the reading lesson. Only a few second joking can attract the students' engagement into the lesson more easily. Therefore, it should not be ignored or left out in the process of teaching reading comprehension.

Criticizing student's behavior & Criticizing student's responses

1.3% and 0.6% of the teacher talk occurrence in classroom observation with T1 and T2 were the indicators of criticizing students' behavior and criticizing the students' responses. These items ranked the last in the 11 categories investigated. In fact, criticizing students is not regarded as a kind of positive and conductive interactive activities, since it can make the students confused, or even embarrassed. The teachers as the controllers in their teaching process seemed to be very careful when showing their dissatisfaction with the passive students. Although they were not pleased with the students' behavior, they expressed their judging manner in a positive way for their students not to feel hurt. In other words, their positive

criticism could reduce or avoid negative impact on her students' feeling, as illustrated in the following extracts.

Extract 13 (T1)

> *T. Group 2, could you pay attention to my instruction, please? If you fail to understand what I asked you to do due to your lack of attention, your mark will be lowered.*

Extract 14 (T1)

> *T. I am afraid that it is not the answer we need. Can you have a quick look back at paragraph 1 and see if you need to change you answer?*

With the teacher's polite criticism, the students felt at ease rather than being hurt. By this way, students was given opportunities to correct their mistake by themselves. Therefore, the teacher's critical utterances are important for forming positive or negative reaction of the students, and creating the interactive or passive atmosphere in reading comprehension class.

V.   Conclusions and implications

This study investigated teacher talk as an interactive activity deployed in EFL reading comprehension classes. The findings showed that all eleven items in teacher talk categories in FLINT system all appeared in the observed reading lessons with various frequencies of occurrences. From 154 and 172 occurrences recorded in five classroom observations with T1 and T2 respectively, the results disclosed that *Praising or encouraging* and *Giving direction* were the two mostly employed activities. *Giving information* and *Student's response verbatim* ranked fourth and fifth respectively. *Dealing with feeling* and *asking the questions* ranked the fifth in the list, *joking* ranked the eighth, and two less frequently used items were *criticizing student's behavior* and *criticizing student's responses*. From the findings, it can be concluded that the teachers as the participants of the study were very successful in creating an interactive reading class. Their activities mainly focused on the students which led to a student-centered reading classes. By initiating different kinds of activities, they created more opportunities for their students to get engaged in learning process.

Classroom interaction, as its nature, is beneficial in foreign language teaching and learning at different levels of education. Creating an interactive environment in EFL classrooms in general and in EFL reading comprehension class brings a lot of usefulness to not only teachers-in-charge but the students who desire to acquire knowledge as well. Therefore, from the research findings, it can be suggested that teachers should deploy as many interactive

activities for students to join as possible. Together with praising or encouraging students in every classroom activity, the teachers should think of the way to use students' ideas, repeat student's response verbatim, ask questions, deal with students' feeling, giving information, direct students to do something, make jokes and correct students' mistakes without rejection. In addition, criticism in foreign language classroom (as in reading comprehension class) should be in a positive manner so that the students do not have the feeling of being seriously criticized, and they do not get bored with the teacher's critical utterances.

Due to the limitations of time and scope, this study only directed its main focus on teacher talk as interactive activities in teaching EFL reading comprehension using FLINT framework. It should be extended with similar research with student talk, or with teacher talk adapting other frameworks so as to get a deeper insight into this interesting topic.

REFERENCES

1. Arrumaisa, E., Rusmanayanti, A., Arapah, E., & Mu'in, F. (2019). *The Teacher Talks in Teaching Reading Comprehension*. Lingua Educatia, 1(1), 28-41.

2. Brown, H. Douglas. (2001). *Teaching by Principles; An interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. New York: Person Education.

3. Chambliss, D. F., & Schutt, R. K. (2018). *Making sense of the social world: Methods of investigation*. Sage Publications.

4. Creswell, J. W. 2009. *Design qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches, third edition*. USA: Sage Publications Inc

5. Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

6. Goodman, J. S. (1998). *The interactive effects of task and external feedback on practice performance and learning*. Organizational behavior and human decision processes, 76(3), 223-252.

7. Hamiloğlu, K., & Temiz, G. (2012). *The impact of teacher questions on student learning in EFL*. Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the world, 2(2).

8. Jeyasala, V. R. (2014). *A prelude to practice: Interactive activities for effective communication in English*. Alternative pedagogies in the English language & communication classroom, 164-170.

9. Kiasi, M. A., & Hemmati, F. (2014). *The Importance of" Teacher Talk" in Teaching EFL Writing*. Porta Linguarum: revista internacional de didáctica de las lenguas extranjeras, (22), 85-108.

10. Lee, Y. A. (2004). *The work of examples in classroom instruction*. Linguistics and education, 15(1-2), 99-120

11. Mardiana, F., Zainuddin, Z., & Gultom, J. J. (2019). *Verbal interaction in English classroom using Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS)*. GENRE Journal of Applied Linguistics of FBS Unimed, 7(3).

12. Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*.

13. Monarisa, A., & Suwarno, B. (2016). *Teaching Reading Comprehension Through The Interactive Technique*. JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics & Literature), 1(1), 29-37.

14. Moskowitz, G. (1971). *Interaction Analysis—A New Modern Language for Supervisors*. Foreign Language Annals, 5(2), 211-221. DOI: 10.1111/j.1944-9720.1971.tb00682.x

15. Mu'in, F., Arini, D., & Amrina, R. (2018). *Language in Oral Production Perspectives.* Bandung: CV Rasi Terbit.

16. Nasir, C., Yusuf, Y. Q., & Wardana, A. (2019). *A qualitative study of teacher talk in an EFL classroom interaction in Aceh Tengah, Indonesia*. Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 8(3), 525-535.

17. Nunan, D. (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology*. Prentice Hall International.

18. Oktaviani, E. B. (2019). *An Analysis Of Verbal Classroom Interaction And Its Characteristics: Flanders' interaction Analysis* (Doctoral dissertation, UNNES).

19. Pujiastuti, R. T. (2013). *Classroom interaction: An analysis of teacher talk and student talk in English for young learners (EYL)*. Journal of English and Education, 1(1), 163-172.

20. Richards, J. C. (2006). *Developing classroom speaking activities: From theory to practice*. Guidelines-Singapore-Periodical for Classroom Language Teachers Then Magazine for Language Teachers-, 28(2), 3.

21. Safriyani, R. (2017, August). *Classroom Interaction in English Reading Class*. In International Conference on English Language Teaching (ICONELT 2017). Atlantis Press.

22. Smith, F. (2012). *Understanding reading: A psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read*. Routledge.

23. Sofyan, R. R., & Mahmud, M. (2014). *Teacher talk in classroom interaction: A study at an English department in Indonesia*. ELT Worldwide: Journal of English Language Teaching, 1(1), 45-58.

24. Sundari, H., Rafli, Z., & Ridwan, S. (2017). *Interaction patterns in English as foreign language classroom at lower secondary schools*. English Review: Journal of English Education, 6(1), 99-108.

25. Taladngoen, U., Palawatwichai, N., Estaban, R. H., & Phuphawan, N. (2020). *A study of factors affecting EFL tertiary students' reading comprehension ability*. Rangsit Journal of Educational Studies, 7(1), 12-21.

26. Van Lier, L. (2014). *Interaction in the language curriculum: Awareness, autonomy and authenticity*. Routledge.

27. Walsh, S. (2013). *Classroom discourse and teacher development*. Edinburgh University Press.

28. Winanta, A., Rochsantiningsih, D., & Supriyadi, S. (2020). *Exploring EFL Classroom Interaction: An Analysis of Teacher Talk at Senior High School Level*. ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities, 3(3), 328-343.

29. Yang, J., Yin, C., & Wang, W. (2018). *Flipping the classroom in teaching Chinese as a foreign language*. Language Learning & Technology, 22(1), 16-26.

30. Yusuf, H. O. (2015). *Interactive activities and its impact on students' performance in reading comprehension in senior secondary schools in Kaduna, Nigeria*. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 174, 523-528.