Observation of Interaction and Movement in an Esl Classroom

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Abstract: Classroom observation was employed to investigate the amount of interaction as well as movement during an ESL classroom. The observation was guided by observation instruments and guidelines from a public university in Spain. A small size English as a Second Language (ESL) class taught by a veteran teacher was chosen to be the observation target. Throughout the observation, it was found that multiple interaction patterns with varying amounts of time were employed by the teacher. Four genres of teacher movement and dynamic students movement in controlled practice and free practice were also discovered. This offers guiding and instructive implement for notice ESL teachers in respect of classroom interactions and movement.

1. Introduction

Classroom interactions, especially teacher-students interactions were claimed to be an essential point of assisting classroom learning (Allen et al., 2013; Hafen et al., 2015). Enhancing the quality of teacher-student interactions in the classroom is considered a way to teach effectively. Besides classroom interactions, teachers' management in the classroom is also important for effective teaching. There are various factors affecting classroom management, movement is one of the most important factors (Carrie Braniff, 2011). Thus, it is vital to integrate classroom interaction and movement content in teacher training.

Normally, novice teachers feel challenged to have productive interactions with students, additionally, they tend to keep the classroom "still" instead of "dynamic" to avoid chaos in the classroom. Apart from aiding them with theoretical teaching knowledge, it is practical and functional to observe proficient teachers' classroom or read classroom observation report of first-rate lessons.

This article aims at providing a utilitarian perspective of classroom interaction and movement for novice teachers through classroom observation. The observation concentrated on the amount of interaction as well as movement during an ESL classroom taught by an experienced ESL teacher who is also a CELTA trainer. His classroom layout, the design of his lessons, as well as his teaching methods has a guiding and instructive significance.

2. Background

2.1 Classroom Observation

As an important tool for teacher training and evaluation, classroom observation means sitting in another teacher's classroom to conduct the practice of observing (Bilash, 2009). It is a direct way to see teacher's and students' behaviors and interactions, thus, it is a functional way to understand the occurring classroom process and situation (Bilash, 2009).

Observing experienced teachers' class can help new teachers learn some practical skills of classroom management and pedagogy, as well as better understand didactic theories. Additionally, observing novitiate teacher can help them discover the issues in their teaching and better prepared for their teaching career.

Suggested by some researchers (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984; Merriam, 1998), the tips for classroom observation are as follows:

a.Be unassuming and demure in dress and behaviors.

b.Be well-acquainted with the classroom setting before observation.

c.Donot observe too long timein caseof becoming overwhelmed.

d.Be honest and objective, instead of subjective and too technical.

e.During interval in the action, echo observed remarks and scenes in mind.

f.Concentrate on details and observe actively.

g.Pay attention to the interactions taking placeduring observation.

h.Listen carefully to conversations, trying to remember or recorddetailedword for word conversations, nonverbal expressions, and gestures.

i.Keep a running observation record.

2.2 Classroom Interaction

According to Siddiqui H.M (2005) interaction between students and teachers is an significantsection of the teaching learning process. It promotes participation, boosts learning and make students more motivated. It encourages a shift from teacher-centered to a student-centered learning environment while sustaining a teacher-led activity (Daivd. F, 1981).

The framework "Teaching through interactions" were proposed by Hamre et al.(2013) and Pianta (2016) in order to conceptualize and evaluate divergent patterns of classroom interactions: teacher-student as well as student-student. This proposal of this framework is meaningful, it not merely recognize successful classroom practices (Hamre et al.,2013), but also advocate good classroom interactions. Hamre& Pianta (2005) claimed that good classroom interactions might be of particular significance for high-risk students.

The interaction in the classroom can be checked best by observation. Observation methods are applicableto researchers in a variety of ways. They provide researchers with ways to check for non-verbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other, and checks for how much time is spent on various activities (Schmuck, 1997 as cited in Kawulich, 2005).

2.3 Classroom Movement

It was discovered by Carrie Braniff (2011) that movement affected classroom management, students were eager to move, movement impacted learning, the physical location of seatwork affected learning, movement impacted alertness and attention, and movement also impacted nerves and well-being of the students.(Carrie Braniff, 2011) . It is a common sense that students tend to become absent-minded and lack of concentration if they do not participate in the learning process, namely, only sit there and listen to the teacher.This was verified by Cranz (1998) and Jensen (2000), both of them have documented how sitting for long periods of time affected students' focus and concentration, they found that students were less concentrated and more difficult to focus.

Language learning should not be based on rote learning, teachers interaction and students' participation instead are very important. Thusthis observation focused on the interaction and movement to find out some applicable patterns in ESL classroom.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The present study was conducted at a language school belong to a public university in Barcelona. A small size class with 7 adult students aged 26-40 (two males, four females) were chosen to be observed. The participants all have similar English proficiency level (CEFR B2) now they are talking C1-1 lessons. It worth noting that this class lays emphasis on English speaking, it is not a test-taking driven class. Additionally, it is a student-centred class taught by a veteran ESL teacher who is also a CELTA trainer.

3.2 Instrument

The EIM observation tasks was employed in this study, teacher and students'movement along with amount of interaction tasks were extracted from the EIM task toolkit to investigate interaction and movement in the course. The EIM observation tasks were developed in a Language School affiliate to a public university in Spain. It is initially used for language teacher training and teacher evaluation in the university as well as other language institutions. It has also been employed in some classroom observation research. Generally, the tool is very user-friendly and practical.

The first chosen observation task aims at identifying the teacher's preferred interaction pattern and how much the teacher interacts with the learners. The second observation task works towards recognizing how the teacher's movement and body language can influence the pace and focus of the class, along with how does the students move during the lesson. For observation focusing on amount of interaction, the table in the EIM observation task was applied to make note of how long was spent by teacher and students in different types of interactions. Theextra column "student to whole class" was added to classify the interaction patterns in the class to observe in a more detailed way. At the second observation task, drawing a rough "map" and lines were employed to indicate the teacher's movement. The instructions in the EIM corresponding tasks were followed and students were anonymized by using labels.

In the EIM observation tasks, a short period of the class (30mins) is recommended to be chosen. There were several different activities conducted by the teacher in the ESL class that was observed and they were very different. So instead of choosing only one period (30mins),several periods were chosen to observe and analyse.

4. Results

Time	Stage / Focus	Observations
19:06– 19.17 19.19 – 19.43 7.45– 8.57	Before class Introduction Pronunciation Practise (Pronunciation Journey with Diphthongs-first with teacher, then in pairs) Concession Clauses(check homework-concession clause	Write learningtargeton the white broad. Warm up Q & A as students are arriving. Asking students questions:life/study(small talk) 2-3mins per person correct when students made mistakes: Eg: T:person(repeat the error)-S:people Using intonation Pronunciationreview(1mins): Advantage, village, image, cottage Pronunciation Learning:

	construction) Showing progress(kahoot) Controlled Practice (in pair) Free Practice (in pairs+in groups)	Teacher explanation(2mins) Drill(1mins) Pronunciation Game(journey) :using minimal pair (20mins) 1.Students check their homework with the teachers's help. (pair work) (10mins) 2.Student show their answer's on the white board (1min) Check the answer (2mins) Teacher's feebback/explanation (2mins) Kahoot: (20 mins) Students take part in Kahoot after viewing their results from last week Controlled Practice: Student "duel" in dyadic circles to practice constructing concession clauses in a scaffolded environment (16mins) Warm up before free practice (5mins) Free Practice: Students generate, then share ideas and pyramid them into one using concession clauses. (16mins)

Map of interaction and teacher movement (classroom layout)

T - Teacher   M - Male   F - Female   WB - White Board   D - Desk   C - Chair

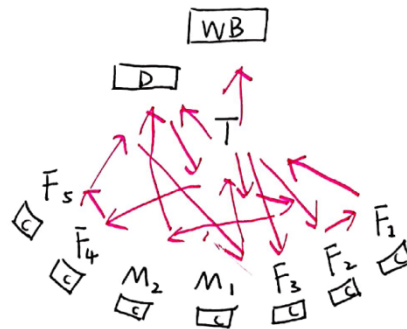Red arrows show Teacher Movement   Green arrows show Student Movement

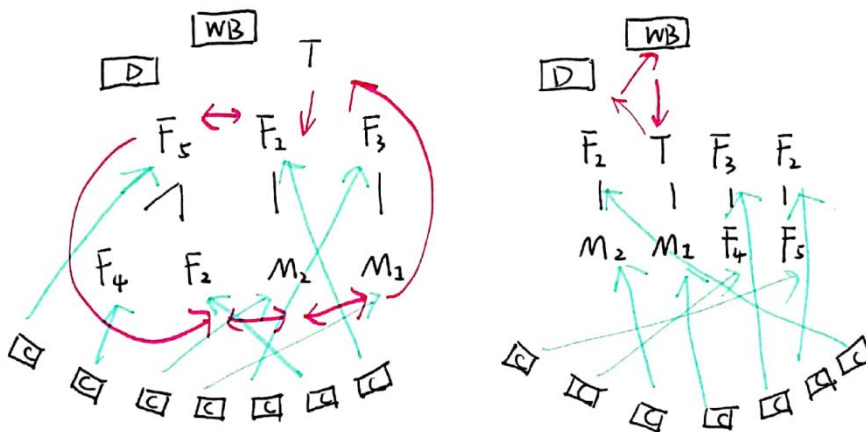*Fig.1 Classroom Layout and Teacher Movement*
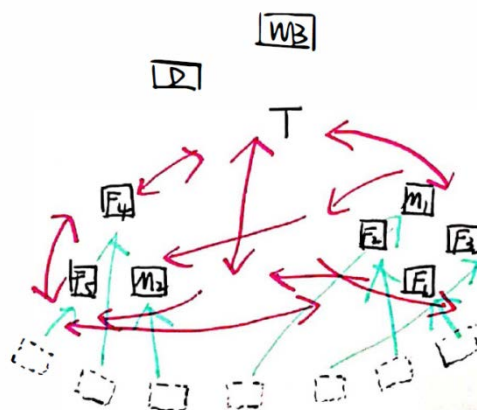

Fig.2 Controlled Practice

Fig.3 Free Practice

Pronunciation Journey with Diphthongs: 23mins

Interaction pattern	Amount of time spent
Teacher → whole class	10mins
Student →whole class	2mins
Pair-work	11mins
Group-work	
Learners working individually	
Other (Example: mingling)	

Homework checking+Kahoot: around 30mins (the chosen short period of class focus on amount of interaction)

Interaction pattern	Amount of time spent
Teacher → whole class	4mins
Student →whole class	2mins
Pair-work	9mins
Group-work	15mins
Learners working individually	
Other (Example: mingling)	

Controlled Practice: 16mins

Interaction pattern	Amount of time spent
Teacher → whole class	2mins
Student →whole class	
Pair-work	14mins
Group-work	
Learners working individually	
Other (Example: mingling)	

Free Practice:17mins

Interaction pattern	Amount of time spent
Teacher → whole class	1min
Student →whole class	
Pair-work	
Group-work	11mins
Learners working individually	5mins
Other (Example: mingling)	

5. Discussion

5.1 General Impression

-The teacher dealt with late arrive students quickly and efficiently.
-The instructions were clear, misunderstandings were dealt with quickly and effectively.
-Due to layout of the room, the teacher could reach or interact with every student.
-Great fun activities, students were clearly enjoying themselves.
-Some learning apps (for example Kahoot) was used to facilitate teaching and learning.
-All students were engaged and on task.

5.2 Interaction

The observed lessonwas a well-designed student-centred language course taught by an experienced teacher. In general, the class was a "real community of learners" (Krause, Bochner and Duchesne 2003). From the charts above we can notice that teacher applied different interaction patterns with different amounts of time for different activities in the lesson that was observed.

For the first activity Pronunciation Journey with Diphthongs, the patterns of the interactions are teacher to the whole class, student to the whole class and also pair-work. The amount of time that spent on teacher's interaction to the whole class is quite similar with pair-work, but student interaction to the whole class is considerably shorter. It was a teacher-led activity with student involvement. The second main part is homework checking plus Kahoot. In this part, the interaction of teacher and student to the whole class takes small amount of time, and it mainly happened in the homework checking section, the teacher also gave minimal instruction before the activity through the Kahoot. During the activity, group-work and pair-work took up the most of the time. Students were involved in the activity and they seemed to enjoy it. The last two activities (Controlled Practice and Free Practice) were both student-centered, the teacher only spent 1-2mins to give instructions to the whole class. While, pair-work was used mainly in Controlled Practice, students work mainly in groups in Free Practice and also spent a few minutes working individually.

The classroom interaction made the learners more eager to join the learning process and guided the students to easily communicate with their peers and teachers. Generally, the classroom interaction helped the students learn meaningful communication in their learning.

5.3 Movement

Having a classroom full of movement and energy is highly effective. In order to create an active classroom, the teacher implemented several strategies that helped students work together, there were opportunities for transitions and movement, and thus a reduced-stress learning environment was provided.

5.4 Teacher's Movement:

Teachers' body language plays a key role in the energy levels in the classroom, it is difficult to create any energy if a teacher remain seated the whole time at class. Whether a teacher is standing, seated or crouching in front of, to the side of or behind students sends out a message with regard to what the teacher want them to do. (Teacher positioning in the classroom: Teaching English, British Council)

The teacher's movement in this class that were observed included standing, sitting, crouching and walking. Different movements were used in different occasions, following the aim of the activity in progress. In the first part of the class (including Pronunciation Journey with Diphthongs, Homework checking and practice through the Kahoot), students were ordered to sit in a semicircle (theatre seat setting), and there was a table on the left side. When the teacher gives instructions to the whole class, he stood in front or half-sat on the table (in front of the students). During group-work and pair-work, the teacher walked and sometimes crouched besides the student or group of students to listen to their conversation and gave some feedback if necessary. In controlled practice he joined the students and worked with one student since there were 7 students and one student had no pair. He walked from pairs to pairs and crouched aside to listen to students' conversation and gave feedback when it was necessary in the free practice.

5.5 Students' Movement:

"When you move, you stimulate all the nerve cells that we use to think with, and when you stimulate those nerve cells, it gets them ready to do stuff," said Ratey, an expert in neuropsychiatry and author of <Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain> who has spent the past 30 years focusing on the "attention systems" of the brain. Students' movement during classes could benefit their learning.

The students that were observed did not stay at the same place during the class, they were asked to move during different activities. In Pronunciation Journey with Diphthongs, Homework Checking and Practice through Kahoot, students mainly sat on the chair, but they were asked to go to the front to give presentation or move slightly for group-work. In controlled practice and free practice, Students moved notably. They stood up and changed their location for different activities, the teacher also joined the activities and the session was dynamic. (seen as the charts of classroom layout and label of movement above)

6. Conclusion and Implication

The teacher employs various methods to keep the classroom controlled but also dynamic at the same time. He employs various patterns of interactions to interact effectively with the students, furthermore, he manage the time spent on different types of interactions well. In this way, the class could be student-centered, which means students participate in their own learning process. However, the teacher still plays a significant guiding role so that the students interactions won't be purely self-directed and disordered.

When it comes to classroom movement, four main types of movement were found: standing, sitting, crouching, walking. Different kinds of movement appeared in divergent activities. Standing and sitting were mainly discovered in teacher instructing part whereas crouching and walking came up with classroom activities with students participation. Students also moved noticeably during the observed lesson. They were found remain seated when during fully teacher talking phase and were encouraged by the teacher to move substantially during the classroom activities (controlled practice and free practice).

The findings of the current observation report shed light on classroom management with regards to classroom interactions and movement, it is inspirational for novice ESL teachers to implement effective interactions and active movement in their own ESL lessons.

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