

Classroom and Spoken Discourse & Phonology

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1.0 Aims

The aims of this report are:

- a) To make an analysis using Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) Initiation-Response-Feedback (**IRF**) model.
- b) To make a commentary on how easy or difficult it is to fit data from an English lesson into the IRF categories. An EFL lesson from a Japanese high school will be utilized for this discourse analysis.

1.1 Introduction

The primary focus of this research is on spoken discourse that occurs **inside** the classroom. Sinclair and Coulthard (ibid.) specifically chose classroom situations where the teacher was instructing in front of the class. These *teacher-based* lessons assured the maximum amount of control over the structure of the discourse. Even though many educators considered this style of discourse to be rather unnatural, for research purposes, one might agree with the necessity to recognize this for empirical categorization standards. For these reasons, this lesson analysis will also utilize discourse occurring in a classroom situation. In pursuing this type of discourse analysis, the following elements are anticipated by the teacher to be factors in fitting data into the IRF model:

- 1) *Cultural* considerations
- 2) Application of *turn-taking* rules
- 3) Classroom vs. *non-classroom* discourse

2.0 Background Literature

The **cultural considerations** to be addressed will focus on whether or not the students' (in this case Japanese) cultural background will affect the data used for the IRF model. In research based on these factors, Noguchi (1987) argues that *rule conflicts* stemming from cultural differences may eventually lead to breakdowns in communication. I agree this may present a *small* problem, but not enough to make the fitting of this data into the model unreasonably difficult. As found in research done by Schegloff and Sacks (1973)

on **turn-taking**, they believe turn-taking rules must be implemented in the classroom by the teacher for functional discourse to occur. I also agree with this, and predict turn taking be a *significant* variable in being able to fit the data into the model *easily*. To test the **classroom** vs. **non-classroom** theory, two such lessons will be applied to the model. I predict data from the *classroom* lesson will be easier to fit into the IRF because of the nature of classroom language patterns, where the teacher has more control over the pace, content and direction of the lesson. Finally, Levinson (1983) and other researchers in the field of **Ethnomethodology** devoted the majority of their studies to investigating discourse management. Instead of building elaborate structure models, they focused on how utterances related to one another through the study of *adjacency pairs, turn-taking, management, conversational opening and closings, face-saving, politeness, etc.* A predominantly American phenomenon, these studies included many fields including sociology, anthropology and psychology. The primary difference in this field versus classroom discourse is the utilization of, what they refer to as, *real* data. However, some elements, such as turn taking and classroom management, will be incorporated to investigate any possible effects of applying data into the IRF model.

2.1 Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale

The ranking adopted by Sinclair and Coulthard's (ibid:1975) scale contains 4 components: **transaction, exchange, move** and **act**. The **lesson** was originally proposed by Sinclair *et al.* (1972), but seemed to have the same status as a paragraph in grammar. So, it was left out as too difficult to provide structural statements in terms of transactions. **Transactions** have structures expressed in terms of **exchanges**. Very often they begin or end with a *boundary exchange* consisting of a frame and/or a focus. Boundary exchanges will be noted later in the English lesson. This is followed by a succession of either: *informing, directing* or *eliciting* exchanges. The next structure of exchange is expressed in terms of **moves**. A three-move structure was proposed for exchanges: **initiation, response** and **follow-up/feedback** or **IRF** (the IRF model will be the focus of this research.) Finally, moves consist of **acts**, which are the smallest units on the rank scale. The relationships of moves and acts in discourse are quite similar to those of words and morphemes used in grammar. Sinclair *et al.* (ibid.) proposed 22 acts consisting of three categories: *meta-interactive, interactive* and *turn-taking*. Some of these were subdivided in terms of content, but *not* discourse function. The final 17 (minus the act *aside*, where teachers withdrew interactions) are listed below in these two diagrams:

<i>Meta- interactive</i>	<i>Interactive</i>	<i>Turn-taking</i>
marker	informative	acknowledge
metastatement	directive	react
loop	elicitation	reply
	starter	comment
	accept	evaluate

(Coulthard 1985:126)

Within these categories is the IRF model, which will be used specifically to fit our data:

<i>Initiation</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Follow-up</i>
informative	acknowledge	-----
directive	(acknowledge) react	accept
elicitation	reply	evaluate
		comment

(ibid.:127)

The **informative** act functions to pass on ideas, facts, opinions, or other information. An appropriate response might be the acknowledgement that one is simply listening. Next, a **directive** is an act whose function is to request a non-linguistic response within the classroom. An example of this may be the opening of books, looking at the blackboard, listening or writing. Finally, the **elicitation** is an act whose function is to request a more linguistic response. However, the response may be in non-verbal form such as a nod of the head or rising of the hand. Samples of these acts will be analyzed in detail using an English lesson from a Japanese high school.

3.0 The English Lesson

3.1 Background and Preparation

In the English lesson recorded at the Japanese high school, the teacher has chosen a verbs review lesson to help prepare students for an upcoming exam. The method of instruction chosen for this lesson is in the form of a gesture game. The students have been divided into 6 groups (A-F) consisting of 6 members each. First, the teacher

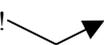
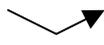
selects a verb from a vocabulary list distributed before the lesson and initiates with the elicitation, “What am I doing?” After one student from each group stands, the teacher then demonstrates the same verb by doing the appropriate gesture (i.e. laughing, drinking, speaking, etc.). The students then bid for the elicitation and informative gesture by raising a fan (with their group letter) and the **designated** speaker for that round replies by guessing in the question form, “Are you *studying*?” The maximum time allotted to each speaker is 3 seconds. Appropriate response time, pronunciation and grammar, are (3) objectives pre-set by the teacher in this lesson. The following classroom discourse is a 2 minute and 48 second extract recorded from a 1-hour lesson. (Note: This particular portion of the discourse was selected for this research because of its **easy** compatibility to the model. Not all of the classroom discourse was as easily applicable as will be discussed in the *Looking Back* section of this report.)

3.2 The Classroom Discourse

The English lesson is categorized into the IRF model. In the left-hand column, it has been labeled with the appropriate symbols: **I** = Initiation, **R** = Response **F** = Feedback. (The additional acts and **tone arrows** will be explained later in the section on lesson analysis.) For a better understanding of the discourse labeling, the script in standard text is teacher and student utterances. The *italicized* script is the use of any spoken Japanese during the lesson. The bracketed script () is any teacher comments. The categories in the right-hand column, are the moves and acts that were labeled by the teacher after the lesson. * Note: The **elicitation** question used in this classroom discourse is, “**What am I doing?**” and is not repeated or changed throughout the **entire** course of this lesson.

(continuing from previous round.....	boundary exchange)
I <u>Teacher</u> : Next round. Stand please! Here we go!	opening /directing/starting
R <u>Student</u> : (one student per group stands)	(NV) acknowledging
F <u>Teacher</u> : O.K.	accepting
I (comparing two pens)	clue
This is red, this is blue. This is old, this is new!	eliciting
R <u>Student</u> : (B speaker raises fan)	bidding
F <u>Teacher</u> : B? (counting 3 seconds)	nominating
Too slow!	commenting
I F???	nominating
R <u>Student</u> : Complaining?	answering

F	<u>Teacher</u> : Noooo. 	accepting
I	C???	nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you comparing?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Yes! Comparing! Very good! <i>Kuraberu. #46.</i> Next round please!	accept/evaluate/comment boundary exchange/starting
I	E group? Nobody?	prompting
R	<u>Student</u> : (student stands up)	(NV) acknowledging
F	<u>Teacher</u> : O.K.	accepting
I	(makes praying gesture)	clue
	In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy spirit, Aaaamen!	eliciting
	F?	nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you praying?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Yes, I am! Praying! #40. Excellent!	accept/comment/evaluating
I	O.K., here we go, here we go, here we go! Achooo! (making sneezing gesture) B – F – E! <i>Saisho wa goo...B – F Janken! B!</i>	boundary exchange/starting clue/eliciting nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you sneeze?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Noooo. 	accepting
I	F??	nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you sneezing?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Thank you! Sneezing.	accepting/evaluating
I	O.K. Next please. (gesturing a bow and arrow) <i>Janken! Saisho wa goo, janken...B,F,A?</i>	boundary exchange/starting clue/eliciting nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you shotting?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Nooooo! 	accepting
I	F???	nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you shooting?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Shooting! Very good. Shooting.	accepting/evaluating
I	Next please! Here we go! D group? (whistling for student to stand) (throws away a piece of paper) B???	boundary exchange/ starting prompting clue nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you.....	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : C? (teacher counts 3 seconds)	nominating
I	(throws away a 2 nd piece of paper)	re-initiating

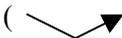
R	<u>Student:</u> Are you throwing?	answering
F	<u>Teacher:</u> No.	accepting
I	C?	nominating
R	<u>Student:</u> Are you throw awaying?	answering
F	<u>Teacher:</u> Noooo! 	accepting
I	D?	nominating
	(teacher throws away a 3 rd piece of paper)	re-initiating
R	<u>Student:</u> Are you dropping?	answering
F	<u>Teacher:</u> No!	accepting
I	E!	nominating
	A! (teacher throws away a 4 th piece of paper)	re-initiating
	Shhhhhhh!!!!	directing
	I can't hear!!!	informing
R	<u>Student:</u> (students become quiet)	(NV) acknowledging
	Are you throw away?	answering
F	<u>Teacher:</u> Nooooo! 	accepting
I	D!	nominating
R	<u>Student:</u> Are you throwing away?	answering
F	<u>Teacher:</u> Throwing away!	accepting
	Good!	evaluating
	Throwing away garbage! <i>Gomi o tsuteru.</i> #48	commenting

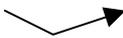
3.3 Classroom lesson analysis

Although the extract is a bit lengthy, a very consistent IRF pattern can be seen. Also, because the grammar objectives focus primarily on the *formal* properties, and discourse focuses on the *functional*, they were both included by the teacher for this lesson. In Sinclair and Coulthard's (ibid.) model, a sample of how closely non-linguistic organization, discourse and grammar interact with one another, can be seen better here in this table:

<u>Level and ranks</u>			(Coulthard 1992:5)
<i>Non-linguistic organization</i>	<i>Discourse</i>	<i>Grammar</i>	
course			
period	LESSON		

topic	TRANSACTION	
	*EXCHANGE	
	MOVE	sentence
	ACT	clause
		group
		word
		morpheme

The three-move structure was initially proposed for (*IRF) exchanges **inside** a classroom environment. The main reason this structuring was developed was firstly, answers directed at the teacher are quite difficult for others to hear, so the repetition may be the first chance to hear what is being said by fellow classmates. Secondly, and even more importantly, a distinguishing feature of classroom discourse is the majority of the questions asked by the teacher are questions to which the answer is *already* known. The primary objective of this is to discover if the students know the answers as well. This comprehension check comes in addition to students demonstrating proper *pronunciation* and *grammar* skills as well understanding the *meaning* of the verb. This can be better accomplished by using **tone** in the feedback or follow-up by the teacher to student responses. There are five tones: *falling*, *rising*, *rise-fall*, *fall-rise* and *level*. The tone is indicated in the discourse by use of a small arrow (Brazil, 1994:8). The tone used by the teacher in the model lesson as feedback, “Nooooo”, illustrates a distinct **fall-rise** () tone and helps the students better interpret the meaning of the follow-up as, “Yes, your answer is being accepted by the teacher, but there is a better answer.”

I	<u>Teacher</u> : Achooo! (making a sneezing gesture)	clue/eliciting
	B?	nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you sneeze?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Nooooo. 	accepting
I	F?	nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you sneezing?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Thank you! Sneezing!	accepting

From the fall-rise tone given by the teacher as feedback, the students can better understand, “Yes, the answer is being accepted, but either the *pronunciation* or *grammar* (in this case the grammar) keeps it from being 100% acceptable by the teacher.” Then, a student from a different group interprets this *fall-rise* tone feedback,

and benefits by asking the question again. This time, the F-group student succeeds by utilizing the previous information and successfully guesses in correct grammatical form.

3.4 Additional Teaching Exchanges

In addition to the IRF pattern, there are other moves and acts of the discourse model to be examined. In the English lesson, the teacher utilizes many other acts highlighted by Sinclair and Coulthard (1992:19) to insure the lesson flows smoothly. They are called **boundary exchanges**. These are framing moves, which occur as openers in a directing exchange and divide a lesson into sections. An example of this can be seen from the model English lesson. Here, the teacher has initiated a boundary exchange with the following information that the next round will now begin.

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| I <u>Teacher:</u> Next round. Stand please! Here we go! | opening |
| R <u>Student:</u> (one student stands per group) | (NV) acknowledging |

The next move the teacher makes is called a **directing** move. It is technically when the teacher tells the students what to do as an opening move in a directing exchange. The response to this is students usually doing what they are told in a **non-verbal** act or NV.

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| I <u>Teacher:</u> Next round. Stand please! Here we go! | directing |
| R <u>Student:</u> (one student stands per group) | (NV) acknowledging |

Other acts include **starters** and **clues**. Starters are statements, questions or commands intended to direct students' attention to a particular area. An example can be seen here in the initiating act of the high school English lesson.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| I <u>Teacher:</u> Next round. Stand please! Here we go! | starting |
|---|----------|

A **clue** is an act used by the teacher to provide additional information. The example from the Japanese high school lesson is illustrated here by utilizing verbal information with an appropriate gesture or visual clue (in this case, the teacher chose two different pens to demonstrate the verb *comparing*).

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| I <u>Teacher:</u> (comparing two pens) | clue |
| This is red, this is blue. This is old, this is new! | eliciting |

Turn-taking acts include **cues**, **bids** and **nominations**. The function of bidding is to allow a student to contribute by raising a hand (in this case a fan) or shouting out the answer. In our sample lesson, this bidding was controlled carefully by using a 3-second time limit, so the teacher could nominate other students also attempting to make a bid.

I	<u>Teacher</u> : (comparing two pens)	clue
	This is red, this is blue. This is old, this is new!	eliciting
R	<u>Student</u> : (B speaker raises fan)	bidding
F	<u>Teacher</u> : B! (counting to 3 seconds)	nominating
	Too slow!	commenting
I	F!	nominating

These *turn-taking* acts allowed each speaker a fair (1/6) chance to bid for the elicitation given by the teacher. This planning allowed a *maximum* of only 6 speakers to bid per round. Without this organization, the teacher might be forced to **cue** from the 36 students, thereby reducing the bidding opportunity to a 1/36 chance. As a result of this management, cues were not a necessity for this classroom discourse to occur effectively.

3.5 Fitting the pieces together

Because the rules of the activity have been established at the beginning of the lesson, the students understand that answers will only be accepted in correct grammar and pronunciation within the given time limit of 3 seconds. Even though this defies the previous *function vs. form* debate, the objective of such a strict rule reinforces response time as a reasonable utterance before the teacher can acknowledge it as a proper answer. Finally, the teacher can **accept** the response with feedback or a follow-up by saying *yes*, *no*, *good* or allowing a repetition of the utterance given by the student. Here is an example in the lesson of how the teacher accepts until the targeted grammar is correct.

R	<u>Student</u> : Complaining?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Noooo. 	accepting
I	C???	nominating
R	<u>Student</u> : Are you comparing?	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Yes! Comparing!	accepting

As can be seen in the examples presented above, the discourse seems to *fit* rather well into the IRF model. Each teacher/student utterance follows the model and the lesson frames occur within the given structure. I believe these to be (4) the main reasons why:

- 1) This type of lesson has very structured **turn-taking** rules.
- 2) The teacher was the **only** elicitor during the lesson.
- 3) The data was taken from **classroom** discourse.
- 4) This (2:48) extract of the lesson, was **selected** by the teacher **specifically for this research**.

The advantage of these factors is having little or no room for students to deviate from an IRF targeted-pattern, therefore making it much easier for the teacher to fit the data into the model. However, the question of how difficult or easy it might be to apply the IRF model to other discourse, specifically *outside* the classroom, must be investigated.

4.0 Problems Addressed

In addressing the issue of how easy or difficult it was to match the data from the lesson into the Sinclair-Coulthard (IRF) model, the primary focus of identifying any problems will be on **classroom** versus **non-classroom** discourse. Sinclair and Coulthard's model is very useful for analyzing patterns of interaction where talk is relatively tightly structured, such as between doctors and patients (see Coulthard and Ashby 1975.) However, many problems seem to arise when the data is applied from a less formal discourse model. So, data from a contrasting lesson with such *casual* structure shall be applied, in order to make a more fair and impartial conclusion about discourse analysis.

4.1 Analyzing Non-classroom discourse

As mentioned earlier in our analysis on classroom discourse, the conventions of such rigid discourse provide more predictable and easier applicable IRF patterns. However, a distinct problem develops when trying to apply the model to discourse that occurs outside of the classroom. These problems may include *interruptions*, *open frames*, *free acts*, and *so on*, which cannot be so easily categorized. An example can be seen here from this non-classroom conversation. This discourse occurs during a 10-minute break between classes, and involves students from the previous Japanese high school lesson.

I	<u>Teacher</u> : Hey Sawako, What's up?	eliciting
R	<u>Student 1</u> : Up? I'm studying.	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : No, what's up recently?	re-initiation
R	<u>Student 2</u> : She got a hair cut!	answering
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Oh really? It's suits you!	commenting
R	<u>Student 1</u> : Suits? No haircut.	answering
I	<u>Student 2</u> : How about you?	eliciting
R	<u>Teacher</u> : Me? I'm very busy.	answering
I	<u>Student 1</u> : I'm busy studying.	informing
F	<u>Teacher</u> : Well, don't study too.....	commenting
I	<u>Student 3</u> : Class is starting! Bye!	informing

As can be seen in this short example, it becomes more complicated and difficult to fit the data into the IRF model. The reasons for such problems may be attributed to the following factors:

- 1) The discourse occurs **outside** of the classroom.
- 2) The students **fail** to exercise formal **turn-taking** rules.
- 3) The teacher initiates with an **open-ended** elicitation.

As a result, the elicitation, "What are you doing?," is misunderstood by student #1. Then, the 2nd student interrupts the discourse while violating the turn-taking rule, answering the initial elicitation and by-passing student #1. Soon, the model breaks down even more when the 2nd student becomes the initiator and re-elicits the question back to the teacher. Finally, the IRF pattern fails to be easily applicable when a 3rd student disrupts the discourse by overriding the other 3 participants, thus bringing the transaction to a premature halt. For these reasons, the data from the *non-classroom* discourse was more difficult to apply to the IRF model, compared to the data from the classroom discourse.

Another factor to be considered in analyzing non-classroom discourse is the **participants**. Quite often, as seen here in a short sample of McCarthy's (1991:23) script, exchange and transaction boundaries are difficult to establish clearly into a reliable pattern. This may be attributed to people involved in the discourse. Even though these participants are 'students', their level of discussion hints towards being either *native speakers* of English (NES) or very *high level* English as second language students

(ESL). In addition to this being an out-of-classroom discourse, I argue this *participant-factor* to play a major role in the data not being easily applied to a standard IRF pattern.

(1.22 – continued)

I	<u>Barman</u> : Four sixty-seven please.	informing
R	<u>Lecturer</u> : Is that all, God, I thought it would cost more than that (pays).....thank you..... I thought it would cost more than that.	acknowledging commenting acknowledging commenting
F	<u>Student 1</u> : It's quite cheap.	commenting/answering?
F	<u>Student 2</u> : I wouldn't argue with that one.	commenting/answering?
F	<u>Student 3</u> : No, It's quite good.	commenting/answering?
I	<u>Lecturer</u> : Now, how are we going to carry all these over?	starter/boundary marker? eliciting

(Author's data 1989)

Even though some of these acts can be categorized into an exchange/structure model, one would have to argue this *non-classroom* data is more difficult to categorize into the IRF model. In spite of some obvious markers such as, 'Now,' which may be considered a typical boundary change, there are many other complications in the discourse. For example, the barman disrupting the continuity of the talk, the three students responding to the lecturer at the same time (eliminating any *turn-taking* rules) and finally, the second repetition of the lecturer's initiating comment. When he says, 'I thought it would cost more than that,' might suggest that either his students were not listening, did not hear him by accident or deliberately chose not to acknowledge the comment in the first place! If this were a classroom, the students might be considered somewhat rude for not exercising traditional classroom protocol, thus giving the impression that the classroom is somewhat *out-of-control*. For these reasons, it made it even more difficult to categorize this data properly into a standard teacher/student/teacher IRF pattern.

5.0 Looking Back

In looking back on this research, a multitude of interesting and useful information can be found in regards to why the data was easy or difficult to fit into the IRF model. As predicted, *cultural factors*, *turn-taking*, and *classroom vs. non-classroom* discourse played very large roles when applying the model. In regards to **cultural factors**, the group in this study was a class of Japanese high school students. Similar to studies done

by Noguchi (ibid.) I found my students to use more ‘thinking time’ before responding and were prone to being more passive in activities such as these. My findings included students not raising their hands, not bidding without being nominated, or not asking follow-up questions to clarify concepts either during or after the lesson was completed.

Traditionally speaking, *western-style* education encourages such student behavior and interaction. Whereas students in *eastern-style* education, are not necessarily encouraged to volunteer personal opinions without being first nominated by the teacher. Surprisingly, for the purpose of this research, these factors worked in favor of the teacher because he could control the structure of the lesson. This made applying the data into the IRF model *much easier* to accomplish. However, the disadvantage for students in a lesson such as this, came from little or no deviation from a set pattern. As a result, students may have interpreted slow response time (more than 3 seconds), a pass in nomination or even a ‘no’, as negative feedback. This effect may stifle such participation even greater.

In addressing the issue of **turn-taking**, it was anticipated earlier by the teacher to be a concern when applying data to the IRF model. As predicted, this element proved to be a major factor in being able to categorize discourse data successfully and easily. Because turn-taking rules were enforced during the classroom lesson, the data was easier to fit into the model. In a classroom of 36 pupils, where turn-taking might be an open invitation to disaster, the teacher initiated an elicitation (in this case a gesture), but limited the bidding-group to a maximum of 6 speakers per round. As the activity progressed through the 132 verbs, each student in class had an equal opportunity to bid an average of 21 times within the one-hour lesson. This careful planning and management by the teacher resulted in a 1-bid opportunity per student, every 3 minutes. As a result, it virtually eliminated the problem of any garrulous or dominant speakers, and more importantly, made it much easier for the teacher to fit data into the IRF model.

Another significant factor in applying data to the IRF model, was the use of **classroom discourse** data. As found in this research, using *selected* data from discourse conducted during a classroom lesson, was much easier to categorize because the teacher was in control of the content, objective and pace of the lesson. By contrast, data collected from discourse occurring *outside* of the classroom proved to be a much more challenging task. Because many elements such as violating turn-taking rules affected the flow of the discourse, the non-classroom data proved to be more difficult to fit into the IRF model.

Finally, a key point in the classroom data being easier to apply was due to the **selection** of discourse. Initially, this was not foreseen as a potential problem. But in fact, it turned out to be a major factor in being able to fit classroom data into the IRF categories easily. So, it may be reasonable to assess that even though the classroom data was easier to fit than the non-classroom data, **not all** of the classroom data was as reliable as predicted.

6.0 Conclusion

When trying to apply this data into the model categories, **pros and cons** of using such a system came to light. Firstly, the good points found in using the IRF pattern to help analyze spoken discourse, provided much valuable information in the following areas:

- 1) Self-evaluation of *teacher output*. This helped demonstrate which **type** of lesson was best for this kind of research.
- 2) The positive effects of *intonation*. This inevitably benefited these students during the course of the lesson.
- 3) *Classroom management*. This proved rather essential for the discourse to occur smoothly.

However, in doing research of the kind, quite a few difficult points came to surface:

- 1) The IRF pattern can be *limited* because of its rigid structure.
- 2) This style of English lesson can be overtly *teacher-based*.
- 3) Data analysis of this type can be very *time-consuming*.

In conclusion, it can be difficult to analyze every utterance and place it into its appropriate IRF category. This is primarily true because the speaker can choose to do or say anything they like. For this reason, IRF has been widely criticized by many including Mountford (1975) and Willis (1983), who argue the weaknesses of the model include being too *product-oriented* or *situational*. I agree as well there are many flaws, but believe through careful planning and forethought, discourse analysis can be successfully accomplished as found in this research. In spite of the potential for any possible problems, a solution can be found easier by analyzing *various types* of discourse and properly *selecting* data that may fit the model. Even though the process was quite difficult at times for this author, in the end, it was not impossible to find appropriate discourse data to fit into the IRF model.

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