Classroom Interaction

in a

Korean University English Language Class

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Introduction

> "As language classrooms are specifically constituted to bring about learning, it is not unreasonable to collect data about what goes on there as a means of adding to our knowledge of language learning and use." (Nunan, 1992: 91)

This paper will present the observation of a Korean University first-year Primary Education English Language class to examine classroom interactions. It will begin by briefly describing several observation instruments with a discussion for employing the Tally Sheet as the most suitable technique. From here the tally sheet, pre-observation factors believed to affect outcome and pre-observation comments from the classroom teacher will be discussed. Next, observation results will be presented through an analysis of tallies and tally totals. Finally, this paper will discuss the post-observation meeting that was held between the teacher and observer.

1.0 Observation Techniques Discussed

There were many observation instruments available to the observer, but only the tally sheet was chosen as an appropriate technique for observation, other techniques involved complex coding or grid-work, base amounts of video/audio equipment, subjective observation, and/or professional training in technique usage.

1.1 Complex Techniques

Complex observation instruments include BIAS (Browns Interaction Analysis System), FLINT (Foreign Language Interactions), and COALA (Computer Aided Linguistic Analysis). BIAS and FLINT are "designed for real-time coding in three-second intervals, where in each interval the observer would place a tally in a grid of columns and rows" (Chaudron, 1988: 31) while COALA involves entering data into a computer application programme. As these techniques record information at short, brief intervals and/or use complex grid-work or coding without proper training inconsistent and even falsified results would be obtained from observation.

1.2 Bias inherent in Observation

According to Nunan (1989: 76),

> "it is important to realize from the outset that our preconceptions about what goes on in the classroom will determine what we see. It is extremely difficult (some would say impossible) to go into a classroom and simply observe what there is in an objective way without bringing to the observation prior attitudes and beliefs."

Since Observation Schedules allow observers to document classroom behaviour through the description of classroom events naturally prejudiced observation data would result because one's "attitudes and beliefs colour what one sees when viewing a lesson." (Nunan, 1989: 107) Likewise, the COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) technique, although it codes classroom activities, the category division of classroom activities is subjectivity decided by the observer. Therefore, to best analyze classroom utterances, from either technique, a tape-script and/or video viewing of classroom interactions would be needed, thus involving video/audio equipment which would disrupt class and yield distorted data.

1.3 Lack of Qualitative Data and High-Influence

Another instrument is the SCORE (Seating Chart Observation Schedule) system which qualifies classroom interaction by "a diagrammatic representation of the physical arrangement of the classroom." (Nunan, 1989: 94) Although it records the types of interactions in the classroom it does not preserve the type of qualitative utterance data.

Also, according to Day (in Nunan, 1989: 94), "it is a high-influential task to decide if students talking during group work activity are at- or off-task, unless the observer is close enough to hear the speech."

1.4 Detailed Written Observation
To gather the type of qualitative utterance data an ethnographic approach may be employed, but "deciding what is or is not relevant and salient is a subjective and relativistic matter, which is why ethnographers generally insist on 'thick' description." (Nunan, 1992: 58) However, a detailed written account of classroom activities in real-time is virtually impossible so video/audio equipment would be required, thus increasing the risk of natural classroom flow loss. Moreover, ethnographic observation tends to occur over several years by highly trained specialists.

1.5 A Suitable Technique
Without vast resources (specialized training, time, and recording equipment), and a need to collect quantitative as well as qualitative utterance data in a manner that limits bias in data collection, a tally sheet was chosen as the most appropriate technique for classroom observation. It is done in real-time, does not require complex coding or grid-work, provides the necessary qualitative data with reduced bias (something that is inherent in written narrative recordings) and the observer "can make certain influences about what was going on in the class in which the observation was made." (Nunan, 1989: 77) Furthermore, the tally sheet can protect the classroom's natural flow because the observer, theoretically, sits in silence in a seat off to the side or back of the classroom checking tallies as utterances are observed in the classroom.

2.0 The Tally Sheet
The tally sheet consists of four parts, each describing different types of utterance expected in the classroom. The parts are as follows: teacher initiated; student initiated; disorder or non-utterances; and notes. (See Appendix A)

2.1 Development
Feiman-Nemser and Floden, cited in Richards and Lockhart (1994: 30) point out,
  "Teaching cultures are embodied in the work-related beliefs and knowledge teachers share
     - beliefs about appropriate ways of acting on the job and rewarding aspects of teaching, and
   knowledge that enables teachers to do their work."
Hence, the observer adopted what she had come to expect or anticipate in regard to teacher or student utterances during an English class for Koreans and developed a suitable tally sheet. She also visualized the situation reversed to prevent tally items from being based on subjective opinions.

2.2 The Frame: Part I
The first part of the tally sheet considers classroom teacher utterances such as questions (display – teacher knows the answer, referential – teacher does not know the answer), explanations, motivation, and criticism. It also considers how the teacher deals with students' inability to understand and student errors by tallying modifications the teacher uses when learners do not understand and the type of feedback the teacher provides students. Lastly, the tally sheet tallies the number of questions asked individually by students at their desks that are introduced to the whole class.

2.3 The Frame: Part II
To provide information on the kind of language production generated by learners, the

second part of the tally sheet incorporates student initiated utterances such as student questions (display or referential) and student responses.

2.4 The Frame: Part III
This part takes into consideration any noise or non-utterances that might occur during the class such as silence due to focused attention on teaching materials or confusion due to lack of understanding to provide insight into any low tally totals in the first two divisions.

2.5 The Frame: Part IV
Part four, although not a division for collecting tallies, is an essential part of the tally sheet. The tally sheet has been criticized, in that it "does not show the human element, does not indicate success or failure, categories create straitjacket, and does not indicate the length of interaction". (Nunan, 1989: 79-80) However, by adding a comment section the observer is able to preserve any note-worthy findings or examples of tallied data. Information gathered here could include a) the repeated use of "Good job", b) group/pair work, c) the length of any activity or intermission, and d) the general atmosphere or attitude in the class (done with caution as it introduces bias into the outcome).

3.0 Pre-observation Discussion with the Class Teacher
Halkes and Olson, cited in Richards and Lockhart (1994: 29), suggest that
> "Looking from a teacher-thinking perspective at teaching and learning, one is not so much
> striving for the disclosure of the effective teacher, but for the explanation and understanding
> of teaching processes as they are. After all, it is the teacher's subjective school-related
> knowledge which determines for the most part what happens in the classroom; whether the
> teacher can articulate his/her knowledge or not. Instead of reducing the complexities of teacher-
> learning situations into a few manageable research variables, one tries to find out how teachers
> cope with these complexities."

Consequently, before embarking on classroom observation an initial meeting was set-up between the teacher and observer. This was done to create a friendly working relationship and to learn about the class and the teacher's beliefs and/or approaches to teaching because they were seen as important aspects influencing forthcoming observation results. The meeting also discussed the draft tally sheet so the teacher could examine the kind of observation utterances that would be tallied and make comments and/or alterations to items that were deemed to be collecting data subjectively by the observer. Finally, the meeting defined how the observer would collect data without class interference. (Interview details can be seen in Appendix C.)

3.1 The classroom and students
Since "it is possible to identify a number of important learner characteristics or 'variables' which… influence planning decisions… specification of goals… and… effect on programme design" (McDonough and Shaw, 1993: 7) several factors about the class and its' students were discussed to provide insight on forthcoming tallies. Firstly, the class consists of 42 first-year Primary Education students, all of whom are required to take the class as part of their core curriculum. Secondly, according to the teacher, as students are never absent they are all highly motivated to be good speakers of English. Thirdly, the teacher feels that because students have studied English for 6 years before entering university they have achieved a solid grammar base, but lack good listening and speaking skills. Finally, the students are arranged in three rows of individual desks facing the front of the classroom.

3.2 Classroom Teacher: Background Information
The teacher obtained a BA in Spanish and an MA in Bilingual (Spanish/English) Education from California State University. She taught English and Methodology to Koreans before coming to Korea as an EFL Professor for Gyo-Won University in 1992.

3.3 Classroom Teacher: Personal Beliefs, Methods and/or Approaches to Teaching
The teacher contends to make classroom atmosphere joyful with students contributing most of the classroom discourse. She further claims to never place a student in any situation in which they feel threatened or uncomfortable. In summation of her approach to teaching she cites the Humanistic Approach and the Natural Approach associated with Krashen and Terrell.

Techniques of the Humanistic Approach the teacher claims to follow, according to Moskowitz (in Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 114),

"blend what the student feels, thinks, and knows with what he is learning in the target language… build rapport, cohesiveness, and caring that far transcend what is already there… help students to be themselves, accept themselves, and be proud of themselves… help foster a climate of caring and sharing in the foreign language class."

According to Krashen and Terrell (in Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 135), goals of the Natural Approach the teacher follows

"are based on an assessment of student needs. We determine the situations in which they [learners] will use the target language and the sorts of topics they will have to communicate information about, we do not expect the students at the end of a particular course to have acquired a certain group of structures or forms. Instead we expect them to deal with a particular set of topics in a given situation. We do not organize the activities of the class about a grammatical syllabus."

3.4 Classroom teacher Comments on the Tally Sheet
Items the teacher felt were either inessential or unobservable because they never occurred were tally sheet numbers 11 (teacher lectures about a topic), 16 and 17 (student criticism), and 43 (students perform chorally). (Appendix A) These items would not occur because
1) the teacher strongly believes that students engaging in conversation must be the lesson focus with the teacher contributing little to classroom discourse,
2) she claims to never criticize students, and
3) the teacher views first-year university students at a level beyond rudimentary chorally practiced exercises done in Korean primary and secondary schools.

Items the teacher felt conceivably might not occur during the class because they occurred so infrequently were numbers 5 (teacher explains grammar), and 34 – 37 (students pose questions either during whole-class discussions or individually at their desks). (Appendix A) The teacher feels
1) students already have a solid grammar foundation and do not need lengthy grammar explanations and
2) students generally wish to wait until break-time to approach the teacher individually or in small groups.

Since the above items were deemed irrelevant and/or unnecessary the observer suggested their deletion, however the teacher objected and requested that they remain on the tally sheet. She acknowledged that her personal opinions might not reflect classroom behaviour and/or utterances so by not deleting the items she would be able to

verify her beliefs about classroom interactions. As a result, the unaltered draft tally sheet became the basis for observation.

3.5 Introduction of the Observer
To prevent class disruption and facilitate data collection, the observer would be introduced to the class at the start of the lesson and then proceed to an empty desk centrally located at the end of the third row.

4.0 Observation Results
Observation results showed a preponderance of display type questions and modification techniques, the amount and kind of English generated by learners and the type of feedback the teacher provided students. (For a complete viewing of tallies and tally totals see Appendix B.)

4.1 Preponderance of Display Questions
VanLier (in Nunan, 1989: 30) claims that display "questions have the professed aim of providing comprehensible input, and of encouraging 'early production'." Thus, it seems that to judge whether students had understood textbook materials and encourage English production the teacher made extensive use of display questions, which forced students' attention on dialogues or passage readings.

In pre-observation discussion the teacher claimed to follow the Natural Approach, one technique of this approach is "to provide comprehensible language and simple response opportunities [where] the teacher talks slowly and distinctly, asking questions and eliciting one-word answers." (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 136) It appears that this technique was followed as the teacher constantly used simple, material-based display questions such as "took out…?" and "in…?". (Appendix B-notes)

Given that the teacher focused on the textbook and that the Natural Approach has " a view of language that consists of lexical items, structures, and messages," (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 130) naturally corresponding high tally totals were seen in tally sheet item 6 (Appendix B). It seems that the teacher used display questions for facilitating the explanation of words, phrases, and statements to "provide a wide exposure to vocabulary that may be useful to basic personal communication." (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 135)

Willis (1981: 91) can provide a summary of the purposes likely to have been the teacher's apparent use of display questions:
"There are different kinds of things that students need to understand, and there are also
different levels of understanding, for example:
the main points in a reading or listening passage
specific details in a reading or listening passage
the attitudes of the author or the characters in a task
the meanings of particular words or expressions
the reference value of words like he and them
the meaning of a particular structure item
the general situation in a dialogue"

Furthermore, as the teacher views students deficient in good listening and speaking skills, it appears that display questions were seen as an invaluable tool for encouraging language production because they "develop aural skills and vocabulary and… encourage whole-class participation before moving to some other teaching technique."

(Richards and Lockhart, 1994: 186)

4.1.1 Display Questions: Whole Class Discussion vs. Individually

Classrooms where teachers ask and elicit answers from each student, according to Good and Brophy, cited in Nunan (1991: 192),

> "typically are boring and accomplish little other than the assessment of students' factual
> knowledge. Such assessment is important, but if that is all that is done in discussion,
> students may come to perceive that the teacher is interested only in finding out who
> knows the answers. When this occurs, discussion becomes a fragmented ritual rather
> than a meaningful, enjoyable process."

Thus, as the class consists of 42 students, tally totals indicated the teacher did not ask display questions to individuals as often as to the whole class, which appeared to maintain student interest and atmosphere pleasantness (Appendix B-notes). Moreover, it is probable that the teacher wanted to avoid centering on students during whole-class discussions by asking and eliciting answers from them to be consistent the Humanistic and/or Natural Approach of "fostering a friendly, relaxed atmosphere." (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 135)

4.1.2 Display Questions vs. Total Number of Student Responses

The total number of display questions asked by the teacher was greater than the total number of responses produced by students possibly due to short or non-existent wait times (the length of time a teacher will wait for response) which produced teacher-supplied answers. In fact, Rowe (in Nunan, 1991: 193) found that,

> "on average, teachers waited less than a second before calling on a student to respond,
> and that only a further second was then allowed for the student to answer before the
> teachers intervened, either supplying the required response themselves, rephrasing the
> question, or calling on some other student to respond."

4.2 Use of Referential Questions

> "With the growth in concern for communication in language classrooms… the supposition
> is that open/general questions, or referential questions, would promote greater learner
> productivity, and the latter would likely promote more meaningful communication between
> teacher and learner." (Chaudron, 1988: 127)

Although display questions dominated the lesson, tally totals indicated that the teacher made several attempts at incorporating referential questions into the lesson, however they were asked more often to individuals at their desks than to the whole class. It is possible that as referential question answers require more time and effort, which may result in the loss of interest by other students, referential questions were determined to be more effective during activity-time when the teacher was able to spend more time individually with students. Also, it is possible that the low referential question tally total may be attributed to students' lack of English knowledge, comprehension, and/or proficiency or textbook material did not provide opportunity for such questions.

4.3 Dealing with Understandability

Tally totals revealed that the teacher frequently asked whether students understood the assigned task and then proceeded to use several methods for dealing with understandability when tasks were considered incomprehensible.

4.3.1 Student Responses vs. Understandability

Modifications made by teachers,

> "depending on the nature of the task and the competence of the student or listener…
> may be important modifications, to the extent that they would enhance learner's

comprehension and consequent ability to process the TL [target language] grammar
and lexis." (Chaudron, 1988: 50)

Hence, student response appeared to increase when modifications were implemented because the number of student answers was comparable to tally results for dealing with understandability and the number of referential or display questions aimed at individuals was comparable to the number of responses given individually by students.

However, it is possible that the teacher did not use sufficient modifications during whole-class discussions because the total number of whole-class discussion questions asked by the teacher was more than double the number of student responses.

4.3.2 Question Modification
"The success rate of students responding to subsequent repetition of questions was quite low, lower often than rate of response to questions asked only once." (White and Lightbrown in Chaudron, 1988: 128) Nevertheless, when questions were not understood the teacher commonly repeated the same questions at normal speed and/or rephrased questions by word alteration. "This, of course, may be an artifact of the difficulty of the question and the consequent need to repeat or rephrase more difficult questions several times." (White and Lightbrown in Chaudron, 1988: 128)

Occasionally the teacher repeated the same question appended with another question for clarity. It is likely that the first question was considered too vague for students at their present level of English so the teacher added a second question to increase learner comprehension.

The modification technique she rarely used was to repeat a question using different intonation or stress. These "adjustments in teacher speech to nonnative speaking learners serve the temporary purpose of maintaining communication – clarifying information and eliciting learner's responses" (Chaudron, 1988: 55) and may have been believed unnecessary by the teacher. Likewise, it is also possible that the teacher wanted to maintain 'natural, native' speech to help students build their listening skills.

Other methods of dealing with understandability frequently used by the teacher, but not tallied on the tally sheet, were to write words and/or phrases on the board and/or spell them orally. (Appendix B-notes) As different learners use different learning strategies, it seems that the teacher believed oral or written spellings of words and/or phrases aided both students that learn by hearing as well as those that learn visually.

4.4 Second Language Learner Production
Richards and Lockhart (1994: 187-188) point out that:
"In many classrooms, students have few opportunities… Even when teachers give student's
opportunities to ask and answer questions, they may address their questions to only a few
of the student in the class – those lying within their action zone [students whom the teacher makes
eye contact, addresses questions, or nominates during class]."

This action zone, however, was not detected in the observed classroom because the teacher constantly moved about the classroom asking and/or choosing several students to volunteer during class.

Although the teacher circulated around the room the amount and kind of learner English production was infrequent and minimal contrasting the teacher's belief that student talk should dominate classroom discourse, however when students were given pair-work

they seemed to perform the task actively and joyfully. Also, despite the teacher's belief that choral-exercises did not occur during the class there were several occasions when students repeated chorally, however, they were initiated without the teacher's direction.

4.4.1 Display Questions
Display questions,
> "serve to facilitate the recall of information rather than to generate student ideas and classroom communication. Since convergent [focus on a central idea] questions require short answers, they may likewise provide limited opportunities for students to produce and practice the target language." (Richards and Lockhart, 1994: 187),

Therefore, students were more often asked to demonstrate their knowledge of the target language than to produce 'real' communication as most of the display questions generated short responses, for example "He took out, what?" produced "an avocado". These one-word answers, then, produced questions like "What does avocado mean?" to which a student would volunteer a definition or the teacher would supply the answer.

Although answers were short they may be seen as more like natural conversation than "What did he take out?" and "He took out an avocado." which are "of course rare in real conversation [and] when we do use them, their function is often to express either weariness or sarcasm." (Stevick, 1982:123)

Moreover, according to Chaudron (1988: 173),
> "aside from the possibility that display questions tend to elicit short answers, learners supply the information for didactic purposes only, so it is plausible that they would have less communication involvement in producing a display response, and thus less motivational drive for using the target language."

Therefore, it is possible that this reduced motivational drive may have caused few student responses, which resulted in teacher-supplied answers.

4.4.2 Referential Questions
According to Nunan (1989: 30),
> "It is not inconceivable that the effort involved in answering referential questions prompts a greater effort and depth of processing on the part of the learner. This, in turn, may well be a greater stimulus to acquisition than the answering of display questions."

Consequently, although display question types dominated the teacher's scope of questions, tally totals indicated that several attempts were made to incorporate referential questions into the lesson. "However, it is… obvious that other factors such as the topic area, the learner's background knowledge, and contextual and interpersonal variables will also be operating," (Nunan, 1989: 30) which may have contributed to low referential question usage and/or response.

4.4.3 Student Initiated Questions
"Student-initiated questions would suggest a healthy distribution of the 'ownership' of classroom discourse, which in turn would tend to promote more 'investment' on the part of the learner." (Thornbury, 1996: 282) Hence, tally sheet totals revealed students initiated various questions while the teacher walked around supervising activities. As these questions were initiated during activity-time rather than during whole-class discussions, it seems that removal of the teacher from the focus of attention reduced student inhibitions and enabled them to ask questions.

In traditional Korean classrooms students are usually not encouraged to ask questions

but, instead, are required to sit in silence. So it is possible that student-initiated questions were not as frequent during whole-class discussions because student's "learning style will result from personality variables, including psychological and cognitive make-up, socio-cultural background, and educational experience." (Nunan, 1991: 168) In addition, it is possible that the fear of being chosen during whole-class discussions or looking foolish in front of classmates caused students to hesitate asking questions.

Occasionally student-initiated questions were introduced to the whole class. This action appears to follow pre-observation discussions of the Natural approach by "fitting the needs and interests of students. " (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 135) It is likely that the teacher believed these student-initiated questions relevant for all students to broaden their English interest and ability.

4.4.4 Activity-time / Break-time
Students seemed to actively participate in pair-work. (Appendix B-notes) Consequently, it appears that pair-work activities gave students "the opportunity to draw on their linguistic resources in a nonthreatening situation and use them to complete different kinds of tasks." (Richards and Lockhart, 1994: 152)

The teacher in pre-observation discussion mentioned that students wish to wait until break-time before asking questions, however, tally total results revealed no significant increase in student-initiated questions in comparison to those asked during the lesson. It may have been that the observed lesson was too routine or complex to promote student questions.

4.4.5 Chorally-Practiced Words and/or Phrases
Students learning English in Korea are conditioned from an early age to perform chorally and according to Willing (in Nunan, 1991: 168), "some aspects of an individual's learning style may be altered while others may not." Therefore, although choral activities were not teacher initiated, there were several occasions when students performed chorally by repeating the teacher's pronunciation of words or the teacher's correction of a student's error.

4.5 Feedback
There are two classifications of feedback: positive and negative, both of which were seen in the observed class.

4.5.1 Positive Feedback
"Positive feedback has two principal functions: to let students know that they have performed correctly, and to increase motivation through praise." (Nunan, 1991: 195) Accordingly, tally totals indicated that the teacher distributed her praise equally between the class as a whole and individuals at their desks and encouraged the class as well as individuals on several occasions throughout the lesson.

As tally total results indicate the amount of positive feedback was not extremely high it would appear that the feedback was proper and effective. Moreover, the teacher did not make constant use of phrases such as "Okay" and "Good" suggesting that when praise was given it was done meaningfully because "much of the feedback provided by teachers often seems automatic and its ultimate effect on learners is doubtful." (Nunan,

1991: 197)

Although praise was suggested as being given meaningfully, it might not have been given frequently because students are considered by the teacher to lack good listening and speaking skills. As Good and Brophy (in Nunan, 1991: 197) discovered,

"low-achieving students were praised only 6 percent of the time following a right answer. Even though they gave fewer correct answers [then high-achieving students], low-achieving students received proportionately less praise."

4.5.2 Negative Feedback

There were only four occasions throughout the two-hour lesson when the teacher criticized undesirable behaviour. By saying "Shh…" the teacher quieted students while their classmates were talking. As observation results indicated that students generally appeared to be enjoying the class though laughter (Appendix B-notes), the absence or limited use of criticism appeared to create a friendly, caring environment in the classroom consistent with teacher's view of following the Humanistic Approach.

4.6 Feedback through Error Correction

According to Long, cited in Brown (1994: 220),

"Having noticed an error, the first… decision the teacher makes is whether or not to treat it at all. In order to make the decision the teacher may have recourse to factors with immediate, temporary bearing, such as the importance of the error to the current pedagogical focus on the lesson, the teacher's perception of the chance of eliciting correct performance from the student if negative feedback is given, and so on."

Consequently, the teacher chose to immediately ignore errors or correct errors in a non-threatening manner. Occasionally, she repeated a student's utterance with treatment, transferred to another student, asked the same student to try again or questioned other students for correct utterances.

4.6.1 Non-intervention or Immediate Non-Threatening Error Correction

As the teacher feels students lack good listening and speaking skills to facilitate language production without disheartenment, it is probable that Willis (1981: 90) can summarize her apparent reason for immediate non-threatening error correction or non-intervention:

"When students are experimenting with the new language they have just been taught and beginning to use it for themselves, it would be psychologically unsound to interrupt and correct them, unless they were completely stuck or obviously in a hopeless muddle and feeling unhappy. Teachers should, therefore, not correct, but merely make a note of common errors and plan to deal with them at a later stage."

In fact, "the bottom line is that we simply must not stifle our students' attempts at production by smothering them with corrective feedback." (Brown, 1994: 221) Thus, to encourage language production, it seems that the teacher appropriately managed error correction because the classroom was filled with laughter and expressions of happiness.

4.6.2 Other Error Correction Methods used by the Teacher

By repeating students' utterance with treatment or questioning other students for correct utterance, the teacher appeared to be "trying to help students move ahead in their interlanguage development." (Allwright and Bailey in Richards and Lockhart, 1994: 192)

However, "mistimed error treatment may fail to help, it may even be harmful if it is

aimed at structures which are beyond the learner's stage in interlanguage development." (Allwright and Bailey in Richards and Lockhart, 1994: 192) Therefore, it appears that to preserve students' English development the teacher occasionally transferred to another student or asked a student to attempt their response again.

5.0 Post-observation Discussion with the Class Teacher
By viewing tallied observations, the post-observation interview gave the teacher time to reflect on classroom interactions. The teacher was surprised to discover that the number of questions asked was more than double the number of responses given by students and the tally total for motivation was low. As a result, she will consider both of these findings in her future classes. The high tally total for explanation of words, phrases, or sentences pleased the teacher because she proclaimed these explanations essential for English proficiency. Finally, the teacher was extremely pleased to learn that students appeared to be enjoying the lesson through constant laughter and humour.

The post-observation interview also revealed the teacher's policy on when and how to present feedback. To prevent students from becoming discouraged or embarrassed the teacher familiarizes herself with students, is considerate of their personalities, and tries to remember students that have requested not to be questioned or corrected during class. If a student is receptive to error correction she will immediately correct the error, otherwise, she prefers to write down or make a mental note of the error for later discussion, either in the present lesson or next class. Finally, the teacher advocates question repetition because she feels this action aids understanding. High tally total results for immediate error correction or non-intervention and repetition of a question at normal speed would appear to reflect her policy on providing feedback.

Summary and Further Study
In this paper observation of an English Language classroom has been presented to examine classroom interactions. Observation results showed that a preponderance of display type questions caused observational findings to contrast pre-observation views on the amount and kind of learner language production and question modification appeared to increase understanding. In addition, the teacher's policy on feedback appeared effective because students seemed pleased with the lesson. Finally, the post-observation interview enabled the teacher to reflect on classroom interactions and modify or improve her behaviour in future classes.

Subsequent observations may produce different outcomes because the teacher mention that she felt nervous during the observed class and after class several students inquired about the observer, hence further observation through instruments such as those discussed at the beginning of the paper would produce more concrete data and extensive analysis.

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Appendix A: Pre-observation Tally Sheet
Observation of an English Language Classroom:
Gyo-Won University
Faculty of Primary School Education First Year Students

		Tallies	Total
I. Teacher initiated			
I.1	**Questions**		
1	Teacher asks a display question(she knows the answer) to the class as a whole		
2	Teacher asks a display question(she knows the answer) to an individual		
3	Teacher asks a referential question(she does not know the answer) to the class as a whole		
4	Teacher asks a referential question(she does not know the answer) to an individual		
I.2	**Explanations, Detailing, Directions, Discussions**		
5	Teacher explains grammar		
6	Teacher explains meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence		
7	Teacher gives directions		
8	Teacher explains/details instructions		
9	Teacher discusses/explains culture related topics		
10	Teacher directs students to/uses teaching aids		
11	Teacher lectures about a topic		
I.3	**Motivation**		
12	Teacher encourages class as a whole		
13	Teacher encourages individuals		
14	Teachers praises class as a whole		
15	Teacher praises individuals		
I.4	**Criticism**		
16	Teacher criticizes class as a whole		
17	Teacher criticizes individuals		
18	Teacher criticizes undesirable behaviour		
I.5	**Dealing with Understandability**		
19	Teacher asks for understanding/comprehension of tasks		
20	Teacher repeats a question (normal speed)		
21	Teacher rephrases a question (changes wording)		
22	Teacher repeats a question (slows speech)		
23	Teacher repeats question (different intonation or stress)		
24	Teacher repeats a question (adds additional question for clarity)		
I.6	**Dealing with Errors**		
25	Teacher repeats student's utterance with treatment		
26	Teacher ignores error		
27	Teacher treats error immediately in non-threatening manner		
28	Teacher treats error immediately in threatening manner		
29	Teacher transfers to another student		
30	Teacher returns to a student after error treatment has been made		
31	Teacher questions other students for correct utterance after an error treatment		
32	Teacher asks student to try again		
I.7	**Other**		
33	Teacher introduces individual seat questions to the class as a whole		

		Tallies	Total
II	**Student initiated**		
II.1	**Questions Posed**		
34	Student asks a display question during whole class discussion		
35	Student asks a referential question during whole class discussion		
36	Student asks a question regarding task comprehension during whole class discussion		
37	Student asks a question regarding understandability of words, phrases, or sentences during whole class discussion		
38	Student asks a question individually at his/her desk		
II.2	**Responses**		
39	Student answers a question during whole class discussion		
40	Student answers a question individually at his/her desk		
II.3	**Classroom student talk**		
41	Students talk among themselves (subjects other than lesson based)		
42	Students talk among themselves (lesson based)		
43	Students perform chorally		
III	**Other**		
44	Silence (quietness)		
45	Silence (use of material aids)		
46	Confusion (lack of understanding)		
47	Confusion (classroom rearrangement)		
IV	**NOTES:**		

Appendix B: Post-observation Tally Sheet
Observation of an English Language Classroom:
Gyo-Won University
Faculty of Primary School Education First Year Students

		Tallies	Total
I. Teacher initiated			
I.1	**Questions**		
1	Teacher asks a display question(she knows the answer) to the class as a whole	☐	63 1
2	Teacher asks a display question(she knows the answer) to an individual		12
3	Teacher asks a referential question(she does not know the answer) to the class as a whole		12
4	Teacher asks a referential question(she does not know the answer) to an individual	☐	26 2
I.2	**Explanations, Detailing, Directions, Discussions**		
5	Teacher explains grammar		
6	Teacher explains meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence		42
7	Teacher gives directions		18
8	Teacher explains/details instructions		20
9	Teacher discusses/explains culture related topics		9
10	Teacher directs students to/uses teaching aids		4
11	Teacher lectures about a topic		
I.3	**Motivation**		
12	Teacher encourages class as a whole		4
13	Teacher encourages individuals		5
14	Teachers praises class as a whole		9
15	Teacher praises individuals	☐	10 2
I.4	**Criticism**		
16	Teacher criticizes class as a whole		
17	Teacher criticizes individuals		
18	Teacher criticizes undesirable behaviour		4
I.5	**Dealing with Understandability**		
19	Teacher asks for understanding/comprehension of tasks		15
20	Teacher repeats a question (normal speed)	☐	26 2
21	Teacher rephrases a question (changes wording)	☐	15 3
22	Teacher repeats a question (slows speech)		
23	Teacher repeats question (different intonation or stress)		4
24	Teacher repeats a question (adds additional question for clarity)	☐	9 3
I.6	**Dealing with Errors**		
25	Teacher repeats student's utterance with treatment		9
26	Teacher ignores error		17
27	Teacher treats error immediately in non-threatening manner		18
28	Teacher treats error immediately in threatening manner		
29	Teacher transfers to another student		3
30	Teacher returns to a student after error treatment has been made		1
31	Teacher questions other students for correct utterance after an error treatment		
32	Teacher asks student to try again		4
I.7	**Other**		
33	Teacher introduces individual seat questions to the class as a whole		6

		Tallies	Total
II	**Student initiated**		
II.1	**Questions Posed**		
34	Student asks a display question during whole class discussion		
35	Student asks a referential question during whole class discussion		5
36	Student asks a question regarding task comprehension during whole class discussion		
37	Student asks a question regarding understandability of words, phrases, or sentences during whole class discussion		5
38	Student asks a question individually at his/her desk	☐	34 2
II.2	**Responses**		
39	Student answers a question during whole class discussion		31
40	Student answers a question individually at his/her desk	☐	20 3
II.3	**Classroom student talk**		
41	Students talk among themselves (subjects other than lesson based)		13
42	Students talk among themselves (lesson based)		19
43	Students perform chorally		7
III	**Other**		
44	Silence (quietness)		2
45	Silence (use of material aids)		6
46	Confusion (lack of understanding)		4
47	Confusion (classroom rearrangement)		2
IV	**NOTES:**		
	roll call – in Korean talk about weekend plans, other classes, borrowing pens/paper – all present – about 3 mins.		
	teacher moves students to match unpaired students class 3:00 – 5:00 pm; begin 3:10pm; break-time 4:00pm		
	in Korean students ask each other about task, what page, etc. students repeat after teacher- not teacher initiated		
	listening exercises / individual seat work – reading, writing generally students seem pleased – laughing, joking, actively do tasks		
	2 students run out of class while teacher has back turned no complaints (either in English or Korean) heard		
	teacher uses took out…?; and…?; in…? style questions, little or no wait time – teacher supplies answers to own questions		
	spells words for student understandability either on the board or orally - used "What does this mean?"		
	repeated use of No problems?; Any problems? Shhh…! Lots of laughter – seem happy and pleased		
	student answers mobile phone during class conversation practice about 10 mins; break-time about 10 mins;		
	reading/writing about 10 mins.; demonstrations by students (dialogue or written work) about 10 mins		

• Boxed tallies and corresponding totals indicate occurrence at break-time

Appendix C: Pre-observation Interview

How big is the class? Is it a mixed major class?
- 42 Primary Education first-year students
- part of core curriculum

How is the class arranged?
- rows and columns of desks
- faces the front of classroom
- too big to arrange anything

Where do you spend most of your time during the lesson?
- at the front during whole-class discussions
- walk around during activity work

What is the general level or ability of the students?
- low – listening, speaking
- have studied grammar for 6 years
- don't need more grammar lessons
- highly motivated – never absent

Could I bother you for some background information on yourself, as a teacher?
- graduated from California State University at Chico • BA Spanish • MA Bilingual Education(English/Spanish)
- taught Spanish in ESL classes • worked 8 years in the Training Centre at Chico University
- taught English and Methodology to Koreans • came to Korea in 1992

Do you have a particular approach that you use in relation to the Theory of Language? the Theory of Learning ?
- humanistic approach • natural approach – Krashen Terrell
- try to make classroom atmosphere comfortable – same as personality • doesn't see the need to criticize as they are not children
- never criticizes (only says Shhh… if they are noisy as they are now adults) • no one perfect approach or method
- all students must give their full attention to the student or students talking

What kind of procedures (activities) do you use most often in the classroom?
- pair/group work • listening exercises • uses a textbook • no choral work (not children)
- adapts dialogues • little teacher talking • every 2 weeks do something they can use once they have become teachers

Are there any contextual influences that affect how you teach? (Department heads/resources/etc)
- no one ever asks
- as long as students can speak no problem
- if test results are good no one objects to method or style

Other notes:
- enjoys seeing students' ability develop and increase • occasionally makes use of videos, songs, chants, and games

Appendix D: Post-observation Interview

Presentation of tally results

- Surprised at the number of questions vs. answers and will consider her wait time
  - "I'll have to think about that"

- Not surprised, even pleased, at the tally total for explanation of words, phrases, and/or sentences - "It's important for student understanding as well as a good vocabulary builder"

- extremely pleased upon reading that students appeared to be happy and enjoying the lesson
  - "that's what I'm most concerned about" "I always hope that students are enjoying the lesson" "I always try to make learning English a pleasant experience"

- surprised at the low tally count for student encouragement and/or praise
  - "I thought I did more than that"

Classroom teacher asks, "**Do you think I could have been nervous?**" She then answers, "it may have affected outcome… perhaps you should try it again to see if results were the same or try observing another professor's class… the students may have also been nervous… they came to me later and asked what exactly you were doing there"

- teacher and observer agree to try again next semester

Do you have a policy on when and how to provide or not provide feedback?
- usually repeat the question so students can hear or to help with understanding
- if she knows the student well she will correct the student immediately
- doesn't correct students in front of the class
    –prevents discouragement or embarrassment
- remembers students that have asked not to be questioned or corrected during class
- tries to read student reactions and decide whether or not to correct errors
- writes down errors or makes a mental note of them in order to talk about them later
 (in the present lesson or next class)
- basically tries to be considerate of students' personalities