

TEACHER TALK IN A YOUNG LEARNERS' ENGLISH CLASSROOM^a

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Abstract

Over the last decade, the research on teacher talk has shifted its focus from the quantity of teacher talk, that is, the amount of time a teacher spends talking during a foreign language class, to the quality of teacher talk, i.e. how effective teachers are in facilitating learning and encouraging communicative language exchange by means of speech modifications they make when talking to their students, the way they react to errors or the kind of questions they ask. Researchers found that teacher talk can be a valuable source of comprehensible input and that it may promote communicative environment in the classroom and authentic language use. The aim of this paper is to investigate the attitudes and behaviours of teachers who teach English to young learners concerning teacher talk. For this purpose, we conducted a quantitative research using a questionnaire constructed for this research that included statements about constructive teacher talk (direct error correction, content feedback, prompting, extended wait time, repairing) and obstructive teacher talk (turn completion, teacher echo, extended use of initiation-response-feedback). The investigation tested the null hypotheses that there will be no significant differences in teacher talk with respect to the teachers' gender, age, years of teaching experience and the size of the class in which they teach, and that there will be no difference between the teachers' attitudes towards teacher talk and the frequency with which they engage in teacher talk in the classroom.

Key words: teacher talk, EFL, young learners, attitudes, behaviour.

^a The paper is the result of research conducted within project no. 178002 *Languages and cultures across time and space* funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

The previous version of this paper was presented at the 4th International Conference *Teaching English to Young Learners: Assessment and Learning*, held at the Faculty of Education in Jagodina on 4-5 June 2015, but has been significantly expanded in the written version.

ГОВОР НАСТАВНИКА У НАСТАВИ ЕНГЛЕСКОГ ЈЕЗИКА НА МЛАЂЕМ УЗРАСТ

Апстракт

Донедавно су се аутори истраживања анализе говора наставника у учионици страног језика бавили мерењем количине утрошеног времена током којег наставник на часу говори, да би се током последње деценије усмерили на квалитет тог говора, односно на анализу успешности наставника да олакшају процес учења и подстакну комуникацију на страном језику путем измене свог говора приликом обраћања ученицима, начине на који реагују на грешке ученика, као и на врсте питања која им постављају. Истраживања су показала да говор наставника може бити важан извор разумљивог инпута и да потенцијално доприноси развоју ученичког окружења погодног за комуникацију и аутентичну употребу језика. Циљ овог рада јесте да испита ставове наставника енглеског језика који раде са ученицима на млађем узрасту према говору наставника у учионици, као и пријављено понашање везано за њихов говор на часу. У ту сврху спроведено је квантитативно истраживање анкетног типа путем упитника који је осмишљен за потребе истраживања и који се састоји од изјава које испитују пожељни говор наставника (директно исправљање грешака, пружање повратне информације о садржини одговора, подстицање на говор, продужено време чекања на одговор) и непожељни говор наставника (довршавање учениковог одговора, понављање учениковог одговора, претерана употреба схеме иницијација – одговор – повратна информација). Истраживањем су тестиране нулте хипотезе да се говор наставника не налази у значајној вези са индивидуалним факторима везаним за наставни контекст, укључујући пол наставника, просечну старост ученика којима наставник предаје, године наставног искуства, величину одељења и тип институције која запошљава наставника, те да нема разлике између ставова наставника према одређеном типу говора и учесталости с којом користе тај говор у учионици.

Кључне речи: говор наставника, енглески језик као страни, ученици на млађем узрасту, ставови, понашање.

INTRODUCTION

During the last few decades English language teachers have witnessed a shift in the teaching paradigm, the pendulum swinging more towards communication and away from drill and controlled practice, which resulted in the emergence of a new approach called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). As opposed to the traditional methods such as the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method or the Audio Lingual Method, which relied on analyzing the rules of the grammar of the foreign language, an emphasis on reading and writing (and translation), the use of the students' mother tongue as a tool of instruction, drill and controlled practice, CLT sought to engage learners in communication, to make it as authentic, meaningful and fluent as possible, to develop all skills equally and to take into consideration the cultural and social context in which the process of communication took place.

However, despite the fact that CLT sounded like a major breakthrough and a huge step towards a more efficient foreign language teaching paradigm, over time its downsides emerged due to its inefficiency in tackling and resolving some classroom issues. Firstly, CLT prioritized fluency, meaning and use over accuracy in grammar and pronunciation, which led to a greater focus on oral skills (speaking and listening). This resulted in fluent but inaccurate learners, who were neither able to thrive at higher levels of proficiency nor were able to pass foreign language tests, which required precision and accuracy in addition to fluency. Furthermore, CLT was successfully applied with intermediate and advanced students, but beginners had problems participating in oral communicative activities due to the lack of vocabulary and grammar, so they indeed required more controlled practice and drill to build up their vocabulary and grammar. In addition, the teachers' task was to monitor all the communication taking place, which was difficult and required great teaching skills and preparation. Teachers found it difficult to facilitate genuine interaction and arouse students' interest because of the artificial setting or the students' lack of language proficiency. Finally, CLT was difficult to implement in the foreign language classroom for several reasons, one of them being that the classroom was not a natural real-life setting, but a structured and artificial environment which did not abound in authentic material and native speakers.

In the comparison of language learning in the institutional setting and language learning/acquisition in the immersion setting, which differ in the amount of exposure to the foreign language, degree of authentic language, structure of input, type of interaction, etc. the greatest point of difference is the presence or absence of the teacher. In other words, in the classroom teachers have to fulfill a whole range of different roles which are not realized in real life at all or by one single person. In the course of one class teachers are those that do most of the talking and guide students through a myriad of tasks and activities. That is why this paper investigates the attitudes of teachers who teach English to young learners about teacher talk as well as their actual in-class behaviour, with the purpose of shedding light on what truly goes on in the classroom with respect to teacher talk as one of the most important, yet underinvestigated segments of foreign language teaching.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Regardless of the type of the approach teachers select in teaching a foreign language class, they are always present in the teaching process and can fulfill a range of different roles. Brown (1994, pp. 167-168) elaborates five different roles of the teacher, whereby some belong to the communicative language classroom and others are tied to a more traditional setting. The first role of teacher as the controller belongs to the traditional educational setting and the traditional view of the classroom,

where the teacher is in control of everything that takes place in the classroom, determines what the students do, when they should speak, what language forms they should use. This role can harm and hinder spontaneity in the classroom, which is necessary if students are to use unrehearsed language. Since “freedom of expression given over to students makes it impossible to predict everything that they will say and do” (Brown, 1994, p. 167), so some control is necessary, especially during the planning phase, in order for the class to be organized and to flow interrupted. Another relatively traditional teacher role is that of a director, where the teacher is compared to a theatre director, who guides rehearsed or spontaneous students’ interaction and he/she makes sure that it flows smoothly and efficiently. Another role that Brown (1994, p. 167) lists is that of a manager, in which the teacher plans lessons, modules, courses, he/she structures longer segments of classroom time, allows each individual student to be creative within the parameters set forth. As can be seen, this role is even less traditional and moves towards the communicative end of the continuum, as does the role of the teacher as facilitator. This final role implies that the teacher is there to make the learning process easier for students, which requires them to step out of their role of the controller, manager and director and allow students to find their own path in the learning process.

“A facilitator capitalizes on the principle of intrinsic motivation by allowing students to discover language through using it pragmatically rather than telling them about language” (Brown, 1994, p. 167).

Finally, the teacher as resource is the least directive role, because the initiative is put in the hands of the students, who come to the teacher by themselves to ask for advice or council. Although some planning, control and management in the classroom is necessary, the teacher can at times “allow the students to proceed with their own linguistic development” (Brown, 1994, p. 168).

With all these roles in mind, it is no surprise that some authors have found that around 70% of the classroom time is filled by teacher talk (Rezaee & Farahian, 2012, p. 1239; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010, p. 77).

“Until comparatively recently, teacher talk in the EFL classroom was considered to be something of a danger area for language teachers, and trainee teachers were warned to use it sparingly. ‘Good’ teacher talk meant ‘little’ teacher talk, since it was thought that too much teacher talking time deprived students of opportunities to speak” (Cullen, 1998, p. 179).

As teachers are the main source of the foreign language (Krashen, 1981) besides the teaching material and given the fact that learners are not able to significantly increase their lexical fund simply by being presented with an input in the foreign language (Šuvaković, 2018), it is

the aspects of teacher talk, such as the kind of questions teachers ask, that can significantly affect the quantity and quality of student interaction in the lesson (Brock, 1986). The fact that around 70% of classroom interaction is done by the teacher is not surprising and just implies that researchers should focus much more on the quality and variety of teacher talk than on its quantity. In other words, more emphasis should be

“given to how effectively (teachers) are able to facilitate learning and promote communicative interaction in their classroom through, for example, the kind of questions they ask, the speech modifications they make when talking to learners, or the way they react to student errors” (Cullen, 1998, p. 179).

There are several ways of observing and classifying teacher talk depending on what is deemed important in research and analysis. If the angle of CLT vs. traditional classroom is taken into account, then Cullen’s classification into communicative and non-communicative types of teacher talk (Cullen, 1998) is most convenient. The author lists the following features of teacher talk as communicative:

(1) ‘referential’ questions, where the teacher asks the class something to which he or she does not know the answer, and which therefore has a genuine communicative purpose. These questions have to be distinguished from ‘display’ questions, to which the teacher already has the answer, and only asks the students so they can display their understanding or knowledge (e.g. reading comprehension);

(2) content feedback, where the teacher’s response to student contributions focuses on the content of what the student says rather than on the form;

(3) the use of speech modifications, hesitations, and rephrasing in the teacher’s own talk, e.g. when explaining, asking questions, giving instructions, which mimics real-life spoken language with all its particularities;

(4) attempts to negotiate meaning with the students, e.g. through requests for clarification and repetition, and giving opportunities for the students to interrupt the teacher and do the same (Cullen, 1998, pp. 181-182).

On the other hand, several features of teacher talk can be considered non-communicative, i.e. belonging more to the traditional classroom setting, because they do not represent the way language is used in many situations outside the classroom (Cullen, 1998, p. 182):

(1) use of display questions, whose purpose is to get answers that the teacher already knows;

(2) form-focused feedback, in which the teacher only shows interest in the correct formation of the students’ contributions (appropriate use of lexis, correct use of grammar);

(3) 'echoing' students' responses, i.e. the repetition of what a student has just said for the benefit of the whole class, perhaps as an example of good language use, application of a new rule, or activation of new vocabulary;

(4) IRF (initiation-response-feedback) sequences, in which the teacher initiates the chain (typically by asking a question), a student responds, and the teacher then gives feedback to the student (e.g. 'good') before initiating another chain with another question (Cullen, 1998, 182).

There is another way of classifying teacher talk according to teacher roles (e.g. controller vs. facilitator), which is discussed in detail in Walsh (2002) and İnceçay (2010, pp. 279-280). On the one hand, these authors speak of constructive teacher talk, which increases learning potential because the teacher creates opportunities for learner involvement, and obstructive teacher talk, which hinders learner involvement and restrict or obstruct learning potential. Constructive teacher talk includes:

(1) direct error correction, which is very economic in so far that the teacher corrects the errors with a very open and direct approach and does not spend too much time on interrupting the oral fluency of the students;

(2) content feedback, where the teacher uses conversational language while giving feedback and it resembles utterances found in the real world;

(3) prompting, being the easiest but the most inefficient way of revising a subject in the lesson by telling it again and again, which helps learners engage in the learning/revising process actively;

(4) extended wait time, which means that the teacher lets students think after asking questions thus getting from them more complex answers and increased learner interaction;

(5) repairing of communication breakdown which often occurs due to the fact that learners do not know a particular word or phrase or do not recall the necessary information, so the teacher intervenes and provides missing language (İnceçay, 2010, pp. 279-280).

Conversely, obstructive teacher talk can be:

(1) turn completion, where the teacher fills the gaps without letting the students think about the answer, thus not giving them enough time and space to formulate their response and afterwards to get confirmation checks;

(2) teacher echo, which can have a positive role if used sparingly, but can also obstruct learning and the flow of discourse if overused;

(3) extended use of IRF turn taking, because it depends on the teacher initiation, student response and teacher follow-up and does not allow the students to decide when and what to say in the classroom interaction (İnceçay, 2010, p. 280).

All in all, it is clear that there is a wide variety of teacher talk features whose application in the foreign language classroom depends on several factors, which range from the role of the teacher in any given moment, through the type of the task that the learners are involved in, the

purpose of the exercise, the level of proficiency and the learners' age, to the teaching approach that the teacher chooses in the situation in question.

“Some teacher-fronted tasks (for example, grammar explanations) may require high levels of quite complex teacher talk and very little learner participation, while it is hoped that others (for example, eliciting learner responses) will result in more active learner participation, consisting of longer and more complex turns” (Walsh, 2002, p. 4).

Essentially, “appropriate language use is more likely to occur when teachers are sufficiently aware of their goal at a given moment in a lesson to match their teaching aim, their pedagogic purpose, to their language use” (Walsh, 2002, p. 5). Furthermore, effective use of teacher talk can contribute to higher motivation and invested effort, and the activation of previous knowledge for the purpose of reaching a deeper level of information processing (Danilović Jeremić, 2018). On the other hand, if there is a mismatch between language use and teaching goal, teacher talk is used in a wrong way and does not serve its purpose of teaching, facilitating, controlling, providing input, etc.

METHODOLOGY

This study is an attempt to elaborate on teacher talk in an EFL classroom and to clarify the link between the teachers' use of and their attitudes towards teacher talk on the one side and important contextual factors in an EFL classroom on the other side. The study aims to answer to following research question: What attitudes do teachers hold about the type and quality of teacher talk in an EFL classroom and how do they behave in their classroom in terms of teacher talk? It is hypothesized that there will be no differences in teacher talk in relation to the individual factors in the teaching context, including gender and age of the teachers, years of teaching, the average age of their learners, class size and the institution of employment. It is further hypothesized that there will be no difference between the teachers' attitude towards different types of teacher talk and their reported behaviour in the classroom related to the same types of teacher talk.

The instrument used in the study was designed specifically for this research.¹ The first part included background questions, including gender, age, years of teaching, class size, age of learners and the institution of employment. The main part of the survey included 23 statements concerning different dimensions of teacher talk which the participants rated on a 5-point Likert scale. In testing the validity of the survey, we conducted a factor

¹ The complete questionnaire is given in the Appendix.

analysis in SPSS Statistics software. Following a rotation, the analysis extracted seven factors, with factor loadings shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Rotated component matrix

	Teacher echo	Prompting /Repairing	IRP	Referential questions	Direct error correction	Extended wait time	Content feedback
Item 1	.282	-.083	.038	.058	.721	.300	.001
Item 2	.213	.092	-.157	.095	.330	-.128	.574
Item 3	.763	-.049	.073	.193	.106	.107	-.103
Item 4	.248	-.083	.369	-.223	.596	.232	.174
Item 5	-.065	.057	.867	-.066	.080	.185	.012
Item 6	.343	.589	.066	.100	-.275	-.085	-.021
Item 7	.758	.127	.058	.059	.119	.137	.174
Item 8	.203	.022	.218	.148	.028	-.158	.530
Item 9	.170	.805	-.045	.077	.075	-.094	-.075
Item 10	.583	.016	.104	.418	-.083	.298	-.128
Item 11	-.026	.500	.268	.202	-.029	.065	.604
Item 12	.697	.015	-.091	.327	.115	-.115	.139
Item 13	.238	-.675	.189	.424	.084	-.023	.075
Item 14	.310	-.019	.721	.020	.036	-.122	-.085
Item 15	.784	-.076	.052	.175	.107	.045	.126
Item 16	.037	.058	.838	.044	.037	.141	-.148
Item 17	.147	-.593	.292	-.309	.002	-.189	-.223
Item 18	.358	.051	.142	-.109	-.053	-.563	.284
Item 19	.136	.126	.647	.061	.113	.256	-.021
Item 20	-.211	.377	.004	.698	.074	.326	.253
Item 21	.095	-.250	-.025	-.313	.227	-.666	-.190
Item 22	.253	.203	.533	-.120	.061	.060	.357
Item 23	.014	.129	.065	.693	-.053	.136	.115

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

In testing the internal consistency of the variables, we conducted a reliability analysis. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the extracted factors are as follows:

- 1) Direct error correction, 2 items $\alpha=.786^2$
- 2) Content feedback, 3 items $\alpha=.621$
- 3) Prompting/Repairing, 4 items $\alpha=.676$
- 4) Extended wait time, 2 items $\alpha=.773$

² According to Dörnyei (2007), lower values of Cronbach's alpha in L2 research are expected due to the complex nature of the foreign language acquisition process, since researchers want to measure many different dimensions and, thus, reduce the number of items per factor. Still, values lower than .60 warrant a closer inspection and modification.

- 5) Teacher echo, 5 items $\alpha=.788$
- 6) Use of Initiation-Response-Follow-up turn-taking, 5 items $\alpha=.621$
- 7) Referential questions, 2 items $\alpha=.790$.

The overall reliability of the questionnaire is $\alpha=.752$. For each of the items the participants were asked to rate them first in terms of their attitude towards the particular example of teacher talk, and then in terms of the frequency with which they perform the said example of teacher talk. As a result, for each of the tested variables we were given an insight into both the attitude and the behaviour of the teachers.

The sample consisted of 86 kindergarten and elementary school English teachers (78 female and 8 male). Even though we did not involve stratification while sampling the population, the gender of the participants represented in the sample reflects the true proportion in the population of English teachers working in private and elementary schools in Serbia. The average age of the participants was 35.44, with their ages ranging between 23 and 52. The mean value of the teachers' years of experience was 10.13, with a range between 1 and 21 years of teaching.

Of particular interest for the study was the participants' institution of employment. In this respect, 48 teachers were employed in a state school, whereas 38 were employed in a private school. The average size of classes our participants worked with was 16.12, ranging from 2 students to 30 students. The average age of the learners our participants taught was 10.72, ranging between 3 and 14 years old.

The research was conducted in May 2015. Volunteers were recruited through social networks and received a link to the Google Forms page which contained the questionnaire. All the participants completed the entire survey.

The data were analyzed using the SPSS Statistics software package. Following an initial descriptive analysis, the statistical tests that were applied depended on the type of data being tested and they included an independent-samples t-test, a paired-samples t-test and a one-way ANOVA.

RESULTS

Preliminary results of testing for the normality of distribution indicate that the data is either moderately skewed (values between -1 and $-\frac{1}{2}$ or between $+\frac{1}{2}$ and $+1$) or approximately symmetric (values between $-\frac{1}{2}$ and $+\frac{1}{2}$), and that the excess kurtosis in the tested variables shows both positive results, indicating more outliers than normality, and negative, indicating fewer outliers (see Table 2). The values are between $-.784$ and 1.641 , which is considered acceptable in proving normal univariate distribution.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics

	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
DirErrorCorr B	3.68	0.98	-.608	-.381
ContentFeed B	3.71	0.43	-.716	.997
Prompting B	3.47	0.43	-.613	1.343
ExtendedWaitTime B	4.06	0.92	-.613	-.652
TeacherEcho B	3.99	0.66	-.555	-.075
IRF B	3.67	0.58	.253	-.430
ReferentialQs B	3.96	0.65	-.349	-.784
DirErrorCorr A	3.90	1.00	-.997	.475
ContentFeed A	3.92	0.41	-.479	-.219
Prompting A	3.68	0.42	-.625	1.641
ExtendedWaitTime A	4.11	0.92	-.114	1.534
TeacherEcho A	4.25	0.56	-.454	-.594
IRF A	3.99	0.54	-.187	-.519
ReferentialQs A	4.32	0.67	-.827	1.004

B – behaviour

A – attitude

From the mean values, it is possible to see that the overall frequency of teacher talk in young learners' EFL classrooms is medium to high (the lowest mean score of 3.47 is found for Prompting, while the highest mean of 4.06 is found for Extended wait time), whereas the attitude towards different aspects of teacher talk in an EFL classroom is generally positive (lowest mean of 3.68 for Prompting, highest mean of 4.32 for Referential questions).

The following tables will include only the results that are statistically significant.

In testing for differences between male and female teachers the results of an independent-samples t-test indicate there are only two statistically significant results (see Table 3).

Table 3 Differences in teacher talk between male and female teachers

	Gender	Mean	SD	Mean Diff.	t	p
IRF A	M	4.33	0.35	0.39	1.941	.010
	F	3.94	0.55			
Referential Questions A	M	4.75	0.38	0.47	1.908	.019
	F	4.28	0.68			

Both the traditional Initiation-Response-Feedback chain and the Referential questions, which are considered to have a real communicative purpose, are more frequent with male teachers.

Similarly, in order to test the relationship between the years of experience and the teachers' beliefs about teacher talk and the frequency

with which they use it, we split the sample into four subsamples: 1) 1 to 5 years of experience, 2) 6 to 10 years of experience, 3) 11 to 15 years of experience and 4) 16 to 20 years of experience. A One-way ANOVA yielded a single statistically significant result (see Table 4).

Table 4 ANOVA for Years of experience

	F	p
ReferentialQs B	2.967	.044

Toward identifying which subsamples significantly differ from each other, we conducted a Tukey post-hoc, with the results shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Tukey post-hoc for years of experience

Dependent Variable	I	J	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
ReferentialQs B	1-5	6-10	.03431	1.000
		11-15	-.40158	.317
		16-20	-.63235	.358
	6-10	1-5	-.03431	1.000
		11-15	-.43590*	.045
		16-20	-.66667	.302
	11-15	1-5	.40158	.317
		6-10	.43590*	.045
		16-20	-.23077	1.000
	16-20	1-5	.63235	.358
		6-10	.66667	.302
		11-15	.23077	1.000

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results reveal that less experienced teachers tend to ask more referential questions than their somewhat more experienced colleagues.

In order to test the link between the age of the learners our participants taught and the teachers' attitude towards teacher talk and the frequency of its use, we split the sample into following three subsamples – 1) teachers who teach students at the pre-literacy stage (ages 3 to 6), 2) teachers who work with students in lower elementary grades (ages 7 to 10) and 3) teachers who work with students in higher elementary grades (ages 11 to 15). The results of a One-way ANOVA indicate that only two dependent variables are statistically significant (see Table 6).

Table 6 ANOVA for difference in teacher talk with respect to the age of learners

	F	p
ReferentialQs B	3.672	.030
ContentFeed A	2.979	.047

Additional tests using LSD post-hoc (see Table 7) reveal that referential questions are more frequent with students in higher grades of elementary school as opposed to students in lower grades (mean difference =.38), and that both teachers working with older and younger elementary school students have more favourable attitudes towards content feedback than their colleagues who work with the youngest students (mean difference 1=.68, mean difference 2=.71).

Table 7 LSD post-hoc for Age of learners

Dependent Variable	I	J	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
ReferentialQs B	3-6	7-10	.50758	.273
		11-15	.12500	.785
	7-10	3-6	-.50758	.273
		11-15	-.38258*	.010
	11-15	3-6	-.12500	.785
		7-10	.38258*	.010
ContentFeed A	3-6	7-10	-.71212*	.017
		11-15	-.68023*	.022
	7-10	3-6	.71212*	.017
		11-15	.03189	.732
	11-15	3-6	.68023*	.022
		7-10	-.03189	.732

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

In considering class size as a factor related to teacher talk, we split our sample into following five sub-samples: 1) class size between 2 and 5 students, 2) between 6 and 10, 3) between 11 and 15, 4) between 16 and 20, and 5) 21 and more. The results of a One-way ANOVA indicate that there are four statistically significant results (see Table 8).

Table 8 One-way ANOVA for Class size

	F	p
ExtendedWaitTime B	3.097	.021
ReferentialQs B	4.591	.002
TeacherEcho A	2.512	.049
IRF A	2.341	.063

A further analysis using Tukey post-hoc test reveals that teachers in larger classes tend to wait longer for the students to respond than teachers working in medium-sized classes, and that teachers in the smallest classes tend to ask more referential questions when compared to teachers working with two largest-sized classes (see Table 9).

Table 9 Tukey post-hoc for Class size

Dependent Variable	I	J	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
ExtendedWaitTime B	21 and more	6-10	.64093*	.044
		11-15	.91176*	.037
ReferentialQs B	2-5	16-20	1,16667*	.030
		21 and more	.88725*	.011
TeacherEcho A	2-5	16-20	.78333*	.041
IRF <u>A</u>	21 and more	16-20	.81324*	.044

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

When attitudes towards teacher talk are concerned, teachers in the smallest groups have more favourable attitudes towards echoing their students' responses; also, teachers working with the largest group of students tend to have a more favourable attitude towards the traditional Initiation-response-feedback turn taking than their colleagues working with the slightly smaller class size.

Of special interest for our study was the difference in teacher talk between teachers who work in state schools and their colleagues who work in private schools. For that purpose, we conducted an independent-samples t-test, with the statistically significant results shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Independent-samples t-test for differences between Institution of employment

	Institution	Mean	SD	Mean Diff.	t	p
DirErrorCorr B	State school	3.52	1.04	-0.43	-2.029	.046
	Private school	3.95	0.81			
ReferentialQs B	State school	3.74	0.62	-0.57	-4.105	.000
	Private school	4.31	0.52			
DirErrorCorr A	State school	3.71	1.04	-0.50	-2.161	.034
	Private school	4.21	0.88			
ReferentialQs A	State school	4.22	0.71	-0.28	-1.909	.047
	Private school	4.50	0.57			

From the results, it is possible to conclude that teachers working in private schools more frequently engage in direct error correction when teaching and ask more referential questions than the teachers working in state schools. At the same time, teachers from private schools also have

more favourable attitudes towards these aspects of teacher talk than their colleagues from state schools.

Finally, in order to test the differences between the teachers' attitude toward teacher talk and the frequency of their reported behaviour in using teacher talk, we conducted a paired-samples t-test (see Table 11).

Table 11 Paired differences between behaviours and attitudes

Variable		Mean	SD	Mean Diff.	t	p
DirErrorCorr	B	3.69	0.98	-0.21	-2.719	.008
	A	3.90	1.00			
ContentFeed	B	3.71	0.44	-0.21	-4.837	.000
	A	3.92	0.41			
Prompting	B	3.48	0.43	-0.20	-3.783	.000
	A	3.68	0.42			
ExtendedWaitTime	B	4.07	0.92	-0.04	-.455	.650
	A	4.11	0.92			
TeacherEcho	B	4.01	0.64	-0.25	-4.278	.000
	A	4.25	0.56			
IRF	B	3.68	0.57	-0.31	-6.625	.000
	A	3.99	0.54			
ReferentialQs	B	3.95	0.65	-0.37	-5.152	.000
	A	4.32	0.67			

According to the results, classroom behaviour is significantly different from the attitudes toward teacher talk in six out of seven pairs of dependent variables. In all instances attitudes are reported higher.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the research was to investigate contextual factors in an EFL classroom that are potentially related to the type of teacher talk that teachers use when teaching young learners, as well as their attitudes towards it. The investigation aimed at answering the following research question: What attitudes do teachers hold about the type and quality of teacher talk in an EFL classroom and how do they behave in their classroom in terms of teacher talk? The study yielded a mixed pattern of results.

The first null hypothesis stated that there will be no differences in teacher talk in relation to the individual factors in the teaching context, including gender of the teachers, years of teaching, the average age of their learners, class size and the institution of employment. The results revealed that there was very little variation in teachers' behaviours and attitudes towards teacher talk. Among the dependent variables investigated, only Referential questions consistently yielded significant results (in relation to Gender, Years of teaching, Age of learners, Class size, Institution of employment). Prompting, on the other hand, was not found to be different

in relation to any of the independent variables. With respect to the variable of Gender, the results of previous research have been inconsistent, with some studies reporting that there are no gender differences in teacher behaviour (Sternglanz & Lyberger-Ficek, 1977), while others indicating that female teachers tend to solicit more student responses and provide more feedback, both positive and negative (Statham, Richardson & Cook, 1991). The results of this research have shown that differences exist with only two of the investigated variables (attitudes towards IRF and Referential questions) in favour of male teachers. However, since there were only eight male teachers and two significant dependent variables, it is not possible to reach any further conclusions. The variable of the Years of experience turned out a single significant result (Referential questions), which is highly inconclusive in terms of the research presented. As for the variable of the Age of learners, only differences in two types of teacher talk have been found to be significant (Referential questions and Content feedback), both more frequent with older students. This is logical, since older students have a larger vocabulary and more world knowledge and are therefore able to talk more about different topics in the foreign language. Finally, regarding to Class size, four types of teacher talk proved to be significantly different among teachers. In the smallest classes, Teacher echo and Referential questions were used significantly more frequently, the first one being illogical since teacher echo is used normally in larger classes, so that everyone can hear the input, while the second one is logical, since in small classes teachers can devote more time to students' individual interests. It is possible that teacher echo is used more frequently in small classes because groups of this size tend to be taught in private schools, where teachers are more devoted to providing adequate language input for their students. In the largest classes two higher expressed types of teacher talk include Extended wait time, which is explained by a slower rhythm of classroom dynamics, and the IRF sequence, which is a typical, practiced pattern that most students are accustomed to. Although there are some indications that investigated individual and contextual variables could be the factors related to different types of teacher talk, due to a small number of significant results, it is not possible to reject the first null hypothesis.

The second hypothesis stated that there will be no difference between the teachers' attitude towards different types of teacher talk and their behaviour in the classroom concerning the same types of teacher talk. Based on the results that classroom behaviour is significantly different from the attitudes toward teacher talk in six out of seven pairs of dependent variables, where in all instances attitudes are reported higher, it is possible to reject the second null hypothesis. There is a discrepancy between the beliefs that teachers hold towards the usefulness of different aspects of teacher talk and their actual behaviour in the classroom. While on the one hand teachers' behaviour is connected with their awareness of what they

do in the classroom, their attitudes, on the other hand, are connected with their teacher education and acquired knowledge during their studies. In other words, it is more frequently the case that teachers subconsciously imitate the teaching styles to which they were exposed while they were students than implement the knowledge gained during their teacher education (Pilipović, 2011).

In general, it can be concluded that there is very little or no variation in teacher talk across different contexts, which proves that teachers do not modify or change their teacher talk depending on the task, teaching content, age or level of their students. This goes directly against principles of good teaching practice and indicates a need for further teacher education in this respect. It is necessary for teachers to develop their ability of metacognitive introspection and reflection and to become aware of their own practices and behaviour. There are several ways in which metacognition can be increased, including language learning autobiographies (Bailey et al., 1996), methods of cognitive apprenticeship: case studies, narratives, and practical arguments (Johnson, 1996) and data-based teacher development activities (Borg, 1998).

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the results presented in this paper it is clear that teacher talk is a very significant, yet underdeveloped segment of the foreign language classroom, which deserves a lot of attention, both in pre-service and in-service teacher education. This is especially true having in mind that foreign language teaching in an institutional setting does not resemble authentic language use in many respects (e.g. large groups, one-to-many pattern of interaction, teacher as the main source of input etc.), which additionally implies that CLT should be applied cautiously and with a critical view, taking into consideration a whole range of contextual factors. All these findings should be tied together in order to improve teacher education and raise their awareness concerning teacher talk.

Further research into this topic could cover teacher talk with respect to lesson content (grammar, vocabulary, all four skills, culture) as it is expected that the type of lesson and task at hand should influence the quality and type of teacher talk. Furthermore, in-class observations might also shed new light and provide valuable insights, as might video-recording of the classes and interviews with teachers. This simultaneously indicates the limitations of the present research, which lie in the method employed (questionnaire), as well as in the unequal gender distribution.

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ГОВОР НАСТАВНИКА У НАСТАВИ ЕНГЛЕСКОГ ЈЕЗИКА НА МЛАЂЕМ УЗРАСТУ

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Резиме

Донедавно су се аутори истраживања анализе говора наставника у учионици страног језика бавили мерењем количине утрошеног времена током којег наставник на часу говори, да би се током последње деценије усмерили на квалитет тог говора, односно на анализу успешности наставника да олакшају процес учења и подстакну комуникацију на страном језику путем измене свог говора приликом обраћања ученицима, на начине на који реагују на грешке ученика, као и на врсте питања која им постављају. Истраживања су показала да говор наставника може бити важан извор разумљивог инпута и да можда доприноси развоју учioniчког окружења погодног за комуникацију и аутентичну употребу језика. Истраживања такође показују да употреба различитих типова говора наставника унутар учионице страног језика зависи од неколиких фактора, укључујући улогу коју наставник бира у датом тренутку, врсту задатка који ученици извршавају, њихов ниво знања страног језика, њихов узраст, сврху наставне јединице, као и наставни приступ који наставник усваја у датој ситуацији. Циљ овог рада јесте да на узорку од осамдесет и шест наставника енглеског језика који раде са ученицима на млађем узрасту испита њихове ставове према говору наставника у учионици, као и пријављено понашање везано за њихов говор на часу. У ту сврху спроведено је квантитативно истраживање анкетног типа путем упитника који је осмишљен за потребе истраживања и који се састоји од изјава које испитују пожељни говор наставника (директно исправљање грешака, пружање повратне информације о садржини одговора, подстицање на говор, продужено време чекања на одговор) и непожељни говор наставника (довршавање учениковог одговора, понављање учениковог одговора, претерана употреба шеме иницијација – одговор – повратна информација). Анкетирање је спроведено путем интернета, док су подаци обрађени помоћу дескриптивних статистичких анализа, као и одговарајућих инферентних статистичких анализа, коришћењем пакета SPSS 20. Истраживањем је тестирана одрживост следећих нултих хипотеза: да се говор наставника не налази у значајној вези са индивидуалним факторима везаним за наставни контекст, укључујући пол наставника, просечну старост ученика којима наставник предаје, године наставног искуства, величину одељења и тип институције која запошљава наставника, те да нема разлике између ставова наставника према одређеном типу говора, с једне стране, и учесталости с којом користе тај говор у учионици, с друге стране. Резултати показују да постоји врло мало варијација у говору наставника спрам контекста у коме се настава одвија – установљене су малобројне статистички значајне разлике када је у питању пол наставника, узраст ученика којима наставник предаје, величина разреда, институција запослења. С друге стране, резултати доследно показују да постоји непоклапање између ставова наставника према говору и њиховог пријављеног понашања, при чему наставници имају значајно повољније ставове према одређеном типу говора у односу на то колико тај тип примењују у учионици. На основу резултата може се закључити да наставници не мењају свој говор у зависности од наставног задатка, садржине онога што предају, старости својих ученика, као и нивоа знања на којем се ученици налазе. Овакво затечено стање

косу се са принципима добре наставне праксе и указује на потенцијално проблематичну област у контексту учионице страног језика коју треба додатно истражити. Најважнија практична импликација овог истраживања тиче се потребе да наставници развију способност метакогнитивне рефлексije и да постану свесни контекстуалних чинилаца који могу да утичу на измене говора наставника у учионици, те да спрам тих чинилаца мењају своје понашање. Овај закључак је посебно значајан имајући у виду да настава страних језика у институционалном контексту из неколико разлога не може да омогући аутентично окружење које се заговара у Комуникативном приступу учењу страног језика (међу тим разлозима свакако су велике групе, фронтални облик наставног рада, наставник који представља главни извор инпута), што даље сугерише да је Комуникативни приступ потребно примењивати опрезно, уз критичку дистанцу и имајући у виду цео дијапазон контекстуалних фактора.

Appendix

Pred Vama se nalazi anketa čiji je cilj da istraži neke aspekte komunikacije u učionici engleskog jezika. Anketa je anonimna. Prikupljeni podaci će biti korišćeni isključivo u naučne svrhe. Molimo da odgovorite na sva pitanja.

Pol _____ • M _____ • Ž _____

Godine _____

Nivo obrazovanja _____

Godine staža _____

U kojem razredu predajete (ako predajete u više razreda, molimo da odaberete jedan i da na dalja pitanja odgovarate vezano za razred koji ste odabrali) _____

Predajete u _____ • državnoj školi • privatnoj školi

Veličina odeljenja u kojem predajete _____

Molimo da sledeće izjave ocenite ocenom od 1 (nikad to ne radim) do 5 (uvek to radim) tako **da broj na skali odlikava Vaše ponašanje u učionici**.

1. Kada učenik da pogrešan odgovor na direktno pitanje, ponovim celu rečenicu ispravno.
2. Osvrćem se na sadržinu onoga što je učenik odgovorio tako što postavljам nova pitanja.
3. Nakon svakog odgovora, govorim učenicima da li je odgovor tačan ili netačan.
4. Kada učenik da pogrešan odgovor na direktno pitanje, ponovim ispravno pogrešan deo rečenice.
5. Kada proveravam da li su učenici naučili nove reči, postavljам zatvorena pitanja (npr. Is it a table or a chair?).
6. Dok učenik odgovara, postavljам potpitanja da ga navedem na pravi odgovor.
7. Nakon što učenik da tačan odgovor, ponovim najvažniji deo odgovora da bi ga svi u odeljenju čuli.
8. Govorim „Ok“, „Dobro“, „Tako je“ i sl. ako je odgovor učenika zadovoljavajuć.

9. Ako učenik ne može da se seti reči koju smo učili dok odgovara, navodim ga na engleskom.
10. Postavljam isto pitanje dva puta dok čekam da učenici odgovore.
11. Osvrćem se na sadržinu onoga što je učenik odgovorio tako što komentarišem ili povezujem sa sličnom situacijom.
12. Dok čekam da učenici odgovore, postavljam pojednostavljene verzije istog pitanja.
13. Ako učenik ne može da se seti reči koju smo učili dok odgovara, navodim ga na srpskom.
14. Kada proveravam da li su učenici naučili nove reči, postavljam pitanja sa DA ili NE odgovorima (npr. Is it a window?).
15. Nakon što učenik da tačan odgovor, ponovim odgovor da bi ga svi u odeljenju čuli.
16. Kada obrađujemo novu lekciju, postavljam uvodna pitanja (npr. What do you already know about...?).
17. Ako učenik ne može da se seti reči koju smo učili dok odgovara, kažem mu reč.
18. Nakon što postavim pitanje, sačekam duže od 3–4 sekunde da učenik odgovori.
19. Kada učenik odgovori, koristim gestikulaciju/mimiku da pojačam njegove reči za ostale učenike u odeljenju.
20. Postavljam pitanja otvorenog tipa na koja postoje mnogo mogućih odgovora.
21. Nakon što postavim pitanje, sačekam kraće od 3–4 sekunde da učenik odgovori.
22. Kada obrađujemo novu lekciju, neprestano postavljam pitanja da proverim da li učenici razumeju ključne reči.
23. Postavljam pitanja u kojima učenici treba da daju svoje mišljenje.

Molimo da sledeće izjave ocenite ocenom od 1 (uopšte nije korisno) do 5 (u potpunosti je korisno) tako **da broj na skali odslikava u kojoj meri smatrate da je primer ponašanja u učionici koristan.**

24. Kada učenik da pogrešan odgovor na direktno pitanje, ponovim celu rečenicu ispravno.
25. Osvrćem se na sadržinu onoga što je učenik odgovorio tako što postavljam nova pitanja.
26. Nakon svakog odgovora, govorim učenicima da li je odgovor tačan ili netačan.
27. Kada učenik da pogrešan odgovor na direktno pitanje, ponovim ispravno pogrešan deo rečenice.
28. Kada proveravam da li su učenici naučili nove reči, postavljam zatvorena pitanja (npr. Is it a table or a chair?).
29. Dok učenik odgovara, postavljam potpitanja da ga navedem na pravi odgovor.
30. Nakon što učenik da tačan odgovor, ponovim najvažniji deo odgovora da bi ga svi u odeljenju čuli.
31. Govorim „Ok“, „Dobro“, „Tako je“ i sl. ako je odgovor učenika zadovoljavajuć.

32. Ako učenik ne može da se seti reči koju smo učili dok odgovara, navodim ga na engleskom.
33. Postavljam isto pitanje dva puta dok čekam da učenici odgovore.
34. Osvrćem se na sadržinu onoga što je učenik odgovorio tako što komentarišem ili povezujem sa sličnom situacijom.
35. Dok čekam da učenici odgovore, postavljam pojednostavljene verzije istog pitanja.
36. Ako učenik ne može da se seti reči koju smo učili dok odgovara, navodim ga na srpskom.
37. Kada proveravam da li su učenici naučili nove reči, postavljam pitanja sa DA ili NE odgovorima (npr. Is it a window?).
38. Nakon što učenik da tačan odgovor, ponovim odgovor da bi ga svi u odeljenju čuli.
39. Kada obrađujemo novu lekciju, postavljam uvodna pitanja (npr. What do you already know about...?).
40. Ako učenik ne može da se seti reči koju smo učili dok odgovara, kažem mu reč.
41. Nakon što postavim pitanje, sačekam duže od 3–4 sekunde da učenik odgovori.
42. Kada učenik odgovori, koristim gestikulaciju/mimiku da pojačam njegove reči za ostale učenike u odeljenju.
43. Postavljam pitanja otvorenog tipa na koja postoje mnogo mogućih odgovora.
44. Nakon što postavim pitanje, sačekam kraće od 3–4 sekunde da učenik odgovori.
45. Kada obrađujemo novu lekciju, neprestano postavljam pitanja da proverim da li učenici razumeju ključne reči.
46. Postavljam pitanja u kojima učenici treba da daju svoje mišljenje.