

## Exploring the Role of Teacher Talk in Saudi EFL Classroom: Importance of F-Move in developing Students' Spoken Skill

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### Abstract

English language teaching in Saudi Arabia faces several challenges from both teacher and students' perspective. Teacher Talk (TT) is one of the areas of teaching and learning which is often neglected in classroom research even with its high importance in student learning. Identifying the literature gap on TT in specific sociocultural contexts, this study aims to investigate different types of f-moves in Teacher Talk and their impact on developing students' dialogic skills in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Saudi Arabia. The IRF sequence (initiation, response, feedback or F-move) is considered a common sequence of TT in Saudi EFL classrooms. This study uses Cullen's (2002) analytical framework which focuses on the third sequence of the IRF and Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory to explore the emerging themes of TT in Saudi Arabian secondary classrooms. The methodology of the study is a qualitative case study, and the participants of the study are 18 secondary school teachers all share Arabic as their first language. The data was collected through classroom observation, audio-recording of forty-five-minute classroom lessons, and semi-structured teacher interviews. The analysis focused on the discursual and evaluative role of F-Move. The data analysis shows three F-Move types 1) F-Move Repetition Discursual 2) F-Move Evaluative 3) F-Move Elaborative Discursual. The findings point out that these F-Moves may increase student-teacher interaction, identification, and correction of errors, and maintain and guide dialogic conversation/interaction between teacher and students if it is correctly oriented. The data analysis shows examples in which TT promotes students' involvement and increases their dialogic skills while, on the other hand, when TT reduces students' potential to participate and consequently reduces the students' spoken output.

**Keywords:** EFL classrooms, dialogic skills, f-move functions, teacher talk, teaching English language, the IRF sequence, Saudi Arabia, sociocultural theory

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## Introduction

Classroom teaching activities are an essential part of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process. In the EFL context, it is hard to find 'learning without teaching' (İnceçay, 2010). Appropriate teaching styles have a significant positive impact on the output process of learners and consequently the whole learning and teaching process. A well-used way of studying classroom interactions and analyzing the most common teaching and learning processes is through researching the use of Teacher Talk (TT) in the classroom. TT is an extensively researched concept because of its importance and centrality in EFL teaching and learning. TT refers to the language teachers use to communicate and instruct students in the EFL classroom. According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, TT is defined as:

Variety of language sometimes used by teachers when they are in the process of teaching. Accordingly, when teachers try to communicate with their learners, they often simplify their speech, modify it and develop some spoken teaching styles to address their learners' language needs (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 588).

TT has a deep impact on developing learner's language proficiency and competence and plays a critical role in learning and acquiring the foreign language. Different researchers such as Gibbons (2002, 2009), Mercer (2002, 2008), Van Lier (2001) and others have investigated the impact of TT in EFL context in order to understand its role and impact on the process of learning and teaching. They establish that TT has a crucial in developing student's spoken language and increase and expand students' communicative language skills inside and outside of classrooms. As this study is concerned with TT in Saudi EFL classrooms, it attempts to explore the importance and the role as well as the urgency to modify TT to suit the EFL learners by analyzing teachers F-moves to conclude whether Saudi TT helps or hinders learners' language skills and spoken proficiency.

### Research Objectives

The current study focuses on the role of TT with an emphasis on F-Move in the Saudi Arabian context. The three-main research focuses of this study include

- 1- The role of TT in students' language learning in EFL classroom
- 2- The effects of socio-cultural factors on TT
- 3- To investigate whether TT facilitates or obstructs students' language outputs.

## Literature Review

Classroom discourse and TT has been the subject of investigation of many research studies (Walsh, 2011; Cullen, 1998; Thornbury, 1996). However, the major focus of literature on TT is on its general effectiveness and its role in learner's development. Only few studies have investigated the socio-cultural aspect of the TT and how cultural and sociological factors affect TT. In this regard, the research of Cullen (2002) and Jones (2011) investigate the follow-up move approach in TT with a focus on sociocultural context.

Walsh (2002) asserts that TT can affect student's learning both positively and negatively based on its use and effectiveness. TT can impact the learning process in the classroom and can facilitate or obstruct foreign language acquisition. According to Walsh (2002), the English

language classroom is a social context on its own, and its interactions should be evaluated not on the basis of quantity but quality. The author highlights that some teachers create opportunities for student learning and participation through conscious or unconscious reconciliation between the pedagogical goals and their language use. Therefore, the use of TT to achieve pedagogical goals is ascertained. On the other hand, in some classrooms, TT hinders the involvement opportunities, putting a cap on students' learning. The research also distinguishes between the constructive and obstructive factors of TT. Teachers, by choosing direction error correction, content feedback based on pedagogical goals, asking for confirmation and clarification, and students' participation through students' self-managed turn-taking with minimum teacher intervention, and scaffolding and providing missing input in learners' language breakdown facilitate learners' involvement and maximize the learning potential. On the other hand, the features including, teachers' intervention to smooth turn-taking, an undefined teacher echo, and teacher's interruptions can obstruct learning and involvement of students. However, the teacher echo can play both facilitative and obstructive role, and it is up to the teacher to manage it positively through tying it to a pedagogical goal. So, basically it emphasizes on matching the pedagogical goals with linguistic goals in the classroom to elicit learning potential.

Cullen (2002) has focused on the importance of the F-Move (follow-up move) in TT and its impact on student's learning. The F-Move refers to the feedback or follow-up move by teachers in a classroom; it is the third move in Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) three-part exchange structure Initiate- Response- Follow Up (IRF). The follow-up move occurs when the teacher provides feedback on student's responses to the initiative or questions. Cullen's (2002) study investigates both evaluative and discursual roles of F-Move in English language classroom. Cullen's (2002) study is applicable but not limited to the traditional classrooms where 'whole-class fronted teacher interactions' predominate (Xiao-Yan, 2006). The study highlights how the teacher's follow up move greatly impacts the dialogue and interaction between teacher and students and affects how ideas develop and are expressed by students in response to the initiation. Cullen (2002) highlights four specific characteristics involving reformulation, elaboration, comment, and repetition, and one general feature 'responsiveness' that make the F-Move effective in language classrooms.

In the context of Saudi Arabia where the English Language classrooms hold the single most important opportunity for learning, the effectiveness of TT cannot be more emphasized. The classroom is the only opportunity for students to practice their language skills because the use of English as Foreign Language outside the classroom is quite rare (Hamad, 2013; Khan, 2015; Liton, 2013). Even, the cross-classroom use of English language, i.e., the use of English in teaching other subjects is quite infrequent.

The Saudi English language curriculum focuses on teaching student's the mechanics of English language with an emphasis on passing the exam rather than its communicative value. Therefore, the use of English language is limited to an educational subject and there is a lack of opportunities to practice English language outside of classroom, or in its real communicative environment (Paige, R. M., Jorstad, H. L., Siaya, L., Klein, F., & Colby, J., 2003). The Saudi English Language learners often do not meet the educational goals of communicative proficiency or spoken language skills. Currently, the attitude towards learning English as Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia has transformed with changes in the society's cultural, economic, and political front. The use of English language is increasingly becoming common on all fronts

including business, economics, and education as part of country's efforts to strengthen its ties with the English-speaking countries. The function of English language in print and electronic media is also increasing, indicating a positive trend and environment for the English language. The Saudi Arabian government has put in place Vision 2030, a policy to send an increasing number of students abroad especially to the United States, United Kingdom and Australia for higher education studies. As part of this vision, the Saudi government has launched special overseas scholarship programs for Saudi students under the Ministry of Education. The students also realize the importance of English language in international communication and considers it as a language of higher education. To prepare students for vision 2030 and to strengthen their English language skills, English is now taught as a mandatory subject at elementary level from 4th class (Ur Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013).

Looking at the situation of English language teachers in Saudi Arabia, most of the government and primary schools have Saudis with a minimum of Bachelors in Honors or equivalent degree (major in English) as EFL teachers. Only a small percentage of schools have expatriates from countries like Egypt, Jordan, or Palestine, teaching the English language. The qualification is considered as the only criteria of selection of teachers for teaching the English language. The contracted expatriate English teachers lack the motivation or impetus to challenge existing English language curriculum or teaching practices (Norton & Syed, 2003). Some of the EFL teachers start teaching without any professional training, classroom knowledge, and without any proper knowledge of the language itself (Ur Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). The medium of instruction in Saudi Arabia is Arabic, and all subjects except the English language are taught in Arabic. English is taught as a foreign language in the schools.

According to Al-Seghayer (2014, 2015), English language teaching and learning still faces various challenges in the country. The EFL learners have low communicative proficiency or spoken skills due to several constraints including low motivation, an emphasis on exam-based curriculum, lack of integration of modern teaching aids or technology, traditional classroom approaches to teaching, and unqualified and untrained language teachers (Alresheed, 2008; Fareh, 2010). According to Al-Shumaimeri (2003), the students leave the secondary stage without being able to carry out a short discussion in English. Along with this, the sociocultural barriers to effective language learning and teaching specially affecting TT and interaction between teachers and students impede student's dialogic skills.

As mentioned earlier, the language of instruction in Saudi Arabia is Arabic, and all subjects are taught in the Arabic language at the secondary school level. With regard to TT and student-teacher interaction, researchers have investigated the use of First Language (L1) in the Saudi EFL classroom and its impact on the English language acquisition (Al-Nofaie, 2010; Alshammari, 2011; Khresheh, 2012; Machaal, 2012). The research shows that the use of Arabic in the English language teaching is frequent in Saudi Arabia and both teachers and students have a positive perception about the use of L1. However, the use of L1 is not always strategic or organized in the classroom. Strategically, L1 or Arabic language is used in the EFL classrooms to provide instructions to students, for clarification purposes, to bridge the meaning gap in L1 and second language (L2) in students' mind, and to develop collaborative dialogue in the classroom between peers and between teacher and students (Alshammari, 2011). Al-Nofaie (2010) highlighted that the use of Arabic is almost unavoidable in the Saudi Arabian EFL classroom. The systematic and

eclectic use of L1 improves language skills of the students. Both teachers and students are aware of the disadvantages of the excessive use of L1. Nevertheless, it is often overused beyond its positive impact and hinders students' learning. It was observed that teachers use the Arabic language during instructions or introductory lectures on vocabulary or grammatical features and correcting response. So, basically TT in L2 classrooms was often used in IRF sequences Initiation – Response and F- move the structure. Occasionally, either one of these sequences can occur in L1 which affects the L2 development, or the F-move is not frequently used in the effective way to increase the students' L2 dialogical skills, consequently, the development of spoken language is obstructed.

The research on TT in the Saudi Arabian EFL context is scarce, and the available literature lacks in-depth analysis or pragmatic approach. The few studies that are available on the supportive teacher talk or dialogue between teachers and students emphasize the need to study in-depth TT and dialogue based interaction between teacher and students (Al-Otaibi 2004; Alanazi & Widin, 2016). There are no studies with a focus on F-Move in Saudi Arabian context.

Identifying this gap in the literature, this paper aims to investigate the role of TT and the Teacher's language use in the Saudi Arabian high school EFL classroom. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of TT in the sociocultural context of Saudi Arabia. Following Cullen's (2002) analytical framework of the F-Move, the study examines the importance of both the evaluative and discursal role of F-Move by Saudi EFL teachers. One of the important aspects of Cullen's (2002) research is that it analyzes an extract or teacher-student interaction in a fairly typical traditional classroom in which English as a foreign language is taught. Saudi Arab's EFL classrooms are typical, traditional classrooms with the teacher-centered approach. F-Move is an approach, specifically present in asymmetrical relationship and interaction, i.e., between teachers-students and between parents-children. The use of the F-Move in the equivalent relationships is quite infrequent, but it may occur in some stances (Cullen, 2002). The rationale for choosing an analysis of the F-Move is its relevance to the asymmetrical relationship. Students' learning opportunities are restrained to the classroom in Saudi Arabia which represents an asymmetrical relationship. So, the F-Move analysis is close to the country's EFL classroom and English learning environment.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This paper focuses on the socio-cultural aspects of language learning emphasizing on social-interactions as the core of the foreign language acquisition and learning. The conceptual framework of this paper lies in Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory which highlights that the language learning like other higher-order cognitive functions is greatly affected by social interactions. Vygotsky (1978) investigated the learners' language acquisition through reinforcement from social interaction and studied the impact of collaborative learning on learner's motivation. The sociocultural theory establishes that children learn language from their social interaction and their collaboration with their peers, and the social interactions positively impact language learning. Language learning is part of higher-cognitive functions, and children's cognitive development is strengthened through social interactions and collaborating with others including their peers. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory provided a conceptual framework for studies on TT. The analytical framework of Cullen's (2002) research on the importance of F-Move and its constructive and obstructive role in encouraging students' language acquisition and dialogic

skills also draws on the Vygotsky's theory of social interaction. Even though the focus of the study is on supportive role of F-Move, it also analyzes how students respond to different moves in an EFL classroom.

## **Research Method**

### **Research Sample**

The study sample in this research consisted of 18 secondary schools EFL teachers from Saudi Arabia's Hafr Albatin province. The participants are either Saudi or Egyptian origin. The age of participants varies from 24 to 57 years. These teachers teach English as a foreign language to Saudi learners with Arabic as their mother tongue. The teachers have different academic background, qualification and years of experience, but the similar linguistic background, i.e., all of them are non-native English speakers. Students in the participant's classroom learn English as foreign language without any exposure to native English language communities, and their exposure to the English language and its learning and practice solely depends on the classroom.

### ***Method:***

The research approach is exploratory research with a focus on thematic data analysis to study emerging themes in the TT. It is a qualitative case study, it was conducted on a small sample of participants in one province, and an in-depth analysis of data is carried out. The rationale for using the case study approach is that it allows the researcher to include as many sociocultural and complex factors that affect TT and student learning in the classroom. The data of TT was collected through audio-recording participants' forty-five minute. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews of participants were conducted to evaluate teachers' perspective about TT, its impact on student involvement and how effectively they use it in their classrooms.

The data collected including the extracts from both the classroom transcripts and interview with teachers will be analyzed through aspects of discourse analysis identifying the F-Move approach and its impact on student-teacher interaction.

## **Results and Discussion**

This section will elaborate on the result of these three main foci in detail in the light of discursial data analysis.

### ***The Impact of TT***

Firstly, the results on the impact of TT in English language lessons with an emphasis on F-Move will be discussed. The data analysis of classroom's recorded lectures indicates three types of F-Move in TT including,

- F-Move Discursial Repetition
- F-Move Evaluative
- F-Move Discursial Elaboration

The following transcripts will elaborate the three types of F-Move that are identified in the lessons, followed by the result and discussion of each type.

• **Extract 1: F-Move Discoursal Repetition**

The teacher (WEJ) has a Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature. The classroom consisted of Grade-10 EFL learners in 2nd private school. The teacher explains Travel forward, and armchair travel to the students and the focus of the lesson was on traveling and culture. The extract is taken from the end of the lesson in which teacher-led discussion was happening. The audio-recording represents F-Move Discourse Repetition: See table 1.

Table 1. *F-Move Discourse Repetition*

41	T: I am fifteen years old, ha	S: I like football
42	T: I like football, ha	S: I am Saudi
43	T: I am Saudi	S: I am from Saudi Arabia
44	T: I am from Saudi Arabia	S: I study...
45	T: I study well now, if you have a lot of money and want to travel. Which country do you want to travel to?	S: Dubai
46	T: Very good, Dubai	

The TT in this extract represents F-Move Discoursal Repetition. The teacher only repeated the responses or what student was saying without any evaluation. The teacher repeated the sentences after the student to control and guide student and teacher interaction. The repetition is a strategy that has a strong pedagogical foundation, and it used to confirm, question, or to discriminate between preferred and non-preferred language use. Even though Cullen (2002) identifies repetition as both evaluative and discoursal strategy, here it is only a discoursal strategy to supervise the interaction and to confirm student's responses.

• **Extract 2. F-Move Evaluative**

The teacher (ADF) has a Bachelor's degree with a specialization in Arts and Education. The students are from Grade-11 EFL classroom in the 3rd Private school in Saudi Arabia. The extract is taken from Grammar lesson in which the focus is Present Continuous Tense. It is from the formative assessment part of the lesson in which teacher is reviewing student's learning. The audio-recording representing F-Move Evaluative is transcribed in table 2.

Table 2. *F-Move Evaluative in Teacher Talk*

180	T: I am study English. Is it right?	S1: No S2: No
181	T: Is it right?	S1: No
182	T: I am what?	S: Studying
183	T: Again, again	S: I am studying English
184	T: Yeah	

This is an example of F-Move evaluative in the lessons as the teacher evaluates the language use and asks the student to use the correct language expression. The evaluative sentence/questions 'is it right' is used three times by teacher to confirm whether the expression is grammatically sound or not. The expression evaluates the use of Present Continuous Tense and expects the student to use proper grammar structure. The use of evaluative feedback aims at the perfect modeling of language rather than the meaning of language. The direct corrective feedback points out the mistake and asks students to input the perfect language expression. The evaluative F-Move as it emphasizes the perfect modeling of language, in this case, the Present Continuous Sentence may result in the participation of only the students who are aware of perfect expression.

• **Extract 3: Discoursal Elaboration**

The teacher (DIA) has a bachelor degree with a specialization in English Language and Literature. The classroom is of Grade-12 EFL learners in private school coded school-3. The teacher explains the concept of community living and socialization to the students. The extract is taken from the end of the lecture in which students engage in teacher-moderated discussion. The following audio-recording represents F-Move Discourse Elaboration. See table 3.

Table 3. *F-Move Discourse Elaboration*

221	T: ...What should you do to be a good man? Student 1?	S1: Be polite
222	T: To be polite. What you do to be polite?	S1: Excuse (meant forgive people)
223	T: ...How can you be polite? What is the meaning of being polite? Respect others perhaps. Student 2?	S2: Help
224	T: Help who?	S2: Other people
225	T: Excellent. Help others.	S3: Give them flower...

This extract can be identified as F-Move discoursal elaboration. The interaction between teacher and students develop as teacher repeats after students and intrigue ideas simultaneously. The teacher encourages students to participate in the conversation without any evaluative function. The extract also indicates cross-engagement of students and the students give their response without being afraid of mistakes and correction. The inferential questions in the discoursal elaboration inspire students to think and use their imagination to answer as there are no fixed, or yes or no answers. Open questions and discussion based on the meaning of the expressions rather than its form facilitate the interaction and use of dialogic skills.

The data analysis of the above three extracts indicate three main functions of TT in Saudi Arabian EFL classrooms, i.e., TT helps in 1) guiding and controlling Teacher-Student Interaction, 2) managing student-teacher interaction by language demonstration and evaluating language expressions 3) encouraging students to use dialogic skills in the classroom.

The three extracts from the larger socio-cultural contexts in the EFL classroom confirm the impact of TT on language learning and validates the above mentioned three major roles of TT in the classroom.

The frequency of different types of f-moves in TT in EFL classrooms is recorded. See table 4.

Table 4. *Frequency of different types of f-moves*

No.	Types of TT	Frequency
1.	F-Move Discoursal Repetition	110
2.	F-Move Evaluative	65
3.	F-Move Discoursal Elaboration	39

The above table represents part of the data and the frequency of each type of F-Move in the analyzed data of classroom interactions. It is evident that the F-Move Discoursal Repetition has the highest frequency of 110, while the F-Move Discoursal Elaboration has the lowest frequency of occurrence in the TT transcript.

### *Effect of Sociocultural Factors on TT*

Investigating the effect of sociocultural factors, the predominant speech patterns and the freedom to voice their opinion are the two most important factors impacting TT in Saudi Arabian context. The predominant speech from elders and children's inability to voice their opinion are embedded in the culture and reflect themselves in TT in a school classroom. In Saudi Arabia, learners have a passive role of listeners both at home and in the school. The parental speech domination exists in Saudi society and parents hardly ask for children's opinion. The children take up the role of the follower and simply follow the predominant speech by parents. According to Saudi perspective, teachers fill in the role of parents in school, so the students have a passive role in school as well. The traditional teacher-centered classroom approach can also be traced back to the larger socio-cultural values. The predominant speech also indicates the low involvement and low motivation of students in the classroom where students' passive participation. Therefore, these socio-cultural factors have an impact on TT.

### *Interview Data*

The following extract shows the response of a participant about the sociocultural factors.

- Extract 4: Sociocultural factors

I think students also are affected by their families. Especially their father's authority or parental domination. This is the main authority I guess even though teachers' authority is limited only inside the classroom. (MAM (Initials stand for the participant teacher))

The extract from teacher's observation indicates the socio-cultural barriers in the EFL classroom. It also shows that the teacher's authority is limited to the classroom only, highlighting the limited opportunity to teach and learn English language. One way to counter the negative impact of sociocultural factors is by building student-centered classrooms and encouraging their participation in the classroom. However, reducing the teacher-centeredness is not a solution to improve student's verbal discourse in the classroom in Saudi Arabia because of the interplay of

TT and Teacher's role. The technical and academic issues like low-motivation of students, students' behavior, and lack of interactive teaching aids force teachers to adopt teacher authority over TT. Even though the teachers realize the importance of TT in language classrooms; they have limited understanding of how to implement TT in the classroom effectively without compromising Teacher authority. If TT is not properly managed, it takes the discussion away from being beneficial for learners and results in wasting of time.

• **Extract 5.**

“The students' behaviour also affects and is affected by the teacher talk especially for teacher authority because a teacher needs to deliver a lesson within a particular time so he needs to be aware of that. Also, the authority should not prevent from humour and good atmosphere for learning. The teacher should give chances for students to talk and participate with a low level of authority.” (SAB (Initials stand for the participant teacher)

The extract shows how the teacher's authority and TT come at odds with each other in Saudi English language classrooms. The teachers are forced to choose between TT or Teacher authority, apparently making these two rivalry forces. The interplay of these two is reflected on a daily basis in English language classrooms. Since reducing teacher-centeredness is not the answer, a collaborative learning environment with shared-role of a teacher can help in effectively implementing TT. However, the classroom stakeholders must continuously guide and manage the verbal discourse to make it productive instead of arbitrary interactions.

***Does TT facilitate or Obstruct Language Outputs?***

As the third focus of the paper, the data analysis investigates the role of TT on learners' language output. The data indicate that the facilitative or obstructive role of TT depends on how effectively students can observe the difference in their current proficiency level and their target proficiency level. The Teacher Talking Time (TTT) is not the only factor that determines the positive or negative role of TT, but the quality of TT, inferential value of TT, and accuracy and waiting time on feedback are also valuable factors. The effectiveness of TT is undermined by teachers' lack of awareness of dialogic TT, nature, and timeliness of feedback and inferential questions. Even though these are not the most significant factors to enhance TT's facilitative role in language learning, these can improve students' participation in the classroom interactions.

The F-Move Discoursal Repetition is the most frequent and prevalent F-Move as compared to the other two forms of TT. According to Walsh (2002), the positive F-Move Discoursal repetition is also known as teacher echo as it affirms the students' contributions but, the negative repetition interrupts the dialogue. While the positive repetition is valued as it enhances students' contribution, the negative ones can impede learning by boring students or reducing their opportunities to participate. The rationale for using negative version of repetitive TT is unclear, and in some cases, learners and teachers are not even aware of the facilitative role of TT in encouraging students to talk more in the classroom.

The F-Move evaluative is not the means to promote student-teacher interaction or students' dialogic skills, but it is focused on modeling of ideal language. It helps learners to achieve ideal language proficiency by identifying and correcting the mistakes. However, it does not help in

buoying classroom interactions, ideation, or collaboration between learners. The F-Move evaluative has a form-focused approach in which there is more emphasis on the form of expression than its meaning, and the meaning focused feedback is often less valued.

Finally, the F-Move Elaborative Discoursal is the most effective form of TT in developing and maintaining interactions between teacher and students. The elaborative discourse works around the inferential questions which are the single most important feature of this TT. The inferential questions do not have a predictable or expected set of answers and require student's creative input. These questions basically make students think and answer, thus steering the conversation in the language classrooms. Also, this form of TT is error-tolerant as there is no evaluative feature. As the students do not worry about right or wrong expressions, it plays a constructive role in developing dialogic skills. Strategic and organized use of F-Move Elaborative Discoursal plays a critical role in supporting positive classroom interactions, and the interactional awareness about this approach can result in more effective integration.

Due to the lack of teachers' professional training, the conscious effort of integrating TT and the unification of pedagogical and linguistic goals in the classroom are low. The study calls for further research on how to train teachers for effective use of TT in the classroom and help teachers in leveraging the positive impact of F-Move on student learning.

### **Conclusion**

TT is one of the single most important aspects of learning and teaching of English as Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia because of the limited opportunities to practice English out of the classrooms. Students' learning and practice of learned language are constrained to classrooms. As the EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia face various challenges from both teachers' and students' perspective including lack of motivation of students, teachers' lack of professional training, traditional class management techniques, and outdated teaching aids. It is important to enrich TT to facilitate students' learning and language acquisition, especially spoken skills. In this regard, the study investigated TT with a focus on F-Move in the secondary school EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia. The data was analyzed through discoursal analysis under the conceptual framework of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Three different types of F-Moves were identified in TT: F-Move repetition discoursal, F-Move Evaluative, and F-Move Elaborative discoursal. The data analysis indicated that these types of F-Move are respectively used to control the student-teacher interaction in class, identify the errors and provide corrective feedback, and guide classroom interactions and encourage student involvement. Of the three types, F-Move Elaborative Discoursal is the most effective in maintaining, encouraging, and facilitating classroom engagement and student-teacher interaction, and intriguing creative thinking and response in students through elaboration and inferential questions.

It is established that TT is imperative for students' English language learning in the classroom. The sociocultural barriers that prevail in the family unit and broader society like predominant speech patterns from parents and children's inability to voice their opinion affect TT and its quality and TTT. Coming to the research focus of whether TT F-Move facilitates or hinders the learning, it is noted that the F-Move when used for discoursal purposes, improves learning and plays a constructive role in students' dialogic skills in EFL classroom.

However, it is noted that teachers are not aware of the interactional value of F-Move. There are differences in teachers' linguistic and pedagogical goals which undermine the role of TT. It actually reduces the positive effect, and negative version reduces students' potential for participation in classroom interactions. So, the supportive role of TT has room for significant improvement to effectively integrate into EFL classrooms and build on students' language and dialogic skills.

This paper emphasizes the need for professional teacher training to increase awareness about the student-teacher interaction and strengthening TT to enhance students' learning. It also calls for professional education of teachers to enable them to design concurrent pedagogical and linguistic goals and use TT to promote students' classroom participation.

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