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## THE INITIATION, RESPONSE, AND FEEDBACK (IRF) IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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**Abstract-** *Initiation between teachers and students is the foundation for classroom discourse. Multiple models for classroom discourse could improve the initiation between the teacher and students in the classroom. It is presumptively true that classroom discourse "follows a fairly normal and predictable pattern, also known as IRF, or IRE: Initiation, Response, and Feedback or Evaluation, consists of three parts: a teacher Initiation, a student response, and a teacher Feedback. Some authors and practitioners prefer IRE to represent that teachers' feedback is typically an assessment of a student's participation. Teachers continually evaluate if a statement is correct and provide feedback to students. In this study, researchers use a literature review. A literature review examines academic books, papers, and other sources relevant to a topic, discipline of study, or theory. The study employs reliable sources from articles and e-books. This paper explores the Initiation, Response, and Feedback in English language teaching.*

**Keywords:** *classroom discourse; teacher; student; IRF, literature review*

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### INTRODUCTION

Discourse analysis is a new topic in modern linguistics that is quickly growing and becoming a significant study area. By analyzing the structural elements of a discourse unit, discourse analysis seeks to examine the overall picture of natural communication. The study of classroom discourse, particularly that related to discourse and conversation analysis, can help language teachers understand and manage the language and teaching process. In addition, classroom discourse analysis is the basis for classroom dialogue, which is interactions between teachers and students. Various models for classroom

discourse might enhance the conversation between the teacher and students in the classroom.

In-depth research has been conducted into the interactions in the classroom. There are two main techniques to the study of classroom interaction, according to (Mega Putri, 2018a, 2018b; Levinson, 1983) as cited by (Rustandi & Mubarok, 2017). Discourse Analysis (DA) and Conversation Analysis (CA). Sinclair and Coulthard are proponents of a DA approach to classroom interaction (1975). They claim that IRF structure or pattern is the most distinctive aspect of classroom interaction. The default interactional structure, Initiation Response (IRF), is utilized frequently by academics to examine classroom interaction (Mathieu et al., 2021; Christie, 2002; Kartini et al., 2022).

Initiation, response, and feedback are the three main components of an IRF process. This first turn, called the initiation, introduces a new subject or issue to the turn and may go on to "elicit" responses to the prior topic or even "directive" or "informative" ones (Girgin & Brandt, 2020). The participant speaks during the second turn. The third step is feedback, which is an assessment of the answer. On the participant's second turn, there may be "acceptance," "rejection," "evaluation," or "commentary" (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, p.48). The participant's reaction and other "elicitations" on the turn, however, can happen in following turns and stretch into "multi-unit turns," providing "cohesive segments of discussion" (Girgin & Brandt, 2020).

The IRF pattern begins with a question from the teacher, followed by a student response and feedback from the teacher. It is believed that the learners will gain from this connection about their interactions with teachers. Teachers may help students negotiate meaning with them, and they should do so by asking for clarification, conducting confirmation checks, and conducting comprehension tests (Mathieu et al., 2021). Negotiated meaning facilitates learning, she says. It supposedly raises students' skill levels. Additionally, learners get feedback on their language use during the discussion. It is anticipated that receiving feedback will help them become more proficient.

Some studies have been conducted to explore IRF in the classroom (Rustandi & Mubarok, 2017). For example, a study was conducted to analyze the reflection of IRF (initiation, response, feedback) in speaking class and investigate the dominant sequence among I, R, and F. The result showed that student response becomes the dominant

sequence of IRF in speaking class. Another study about IRF sequences in EFL classrooms was conducted by (Kartini et al., 2022). They used a team to study the teacher-student interaction in the classroom. This study looked at how teachers in team-teaching classrooms complete IRF sequences. The Non-Native English teacher performed as the one who was in charge of the overall management of the classroom and oriented to her role as the teacher in power in the classroom, as evidenced by her repairing student mistakes, allocating who spoke, and managing the progressivity of the activities in the lesson, according to an analysis of the data. The native English teacher concentrated on developing questions and evaluating responses in the traditional IRF sequences.

Classroom interaction (Made & Sari, 2022) with the title Classroom Interaction Analysis in Indonesian EFL Speaking Class. This study uses the theory of FLINT (Foreign et al.) and types of classroom interaction from frameworks (Made & Sari, 2022). The findings revealed that teachers and students applied all the categories of talk mentioned in the FLINT system and classroom interaction types. The discourse in English Foreign Language classrooms, includes various discourse structures (pattern of IRF structures) and classroom interactional abilities. The author of this study examines the EFL classroom dialogue from the perspectives of discourse analysis and conversation analysis. Based on the issues, the author poses some questions:

1. What is the IRF analysis of interaction between teachers and students in English language teaching?
2. How is the implementation of IRF in English language teaching?

## **METHODS**

This study employed a literature review. A literature review can broadly be described as a more or less systematic way of collecting and synthesizing previous research (Snyder, 2019). An efficient and well-conducted review as a research technique creates a strong framework for knowledge advancement and the facilitation of theory creation (Snyder, 2019). By combining the conclusions and viewpoints from several empirical results, a survey of the literature may answer research problems more powerfully than any one study could. In addition, a literature review is also an excellent way of synthesizing research findings to show evidence on a meta-level and uncover areas

in which more research is needed, which is a critical component of creating theoretical frameworks and building conceptual models.

In this research, the researchers employed a literature review supplemented by data collection through articles and e-books, presenting a robust framework for knowledge synthesis and advancement. In essence, combining a literature review with articles and e-books as data collection instruments consolidate existing knowledge and provides a solid foundation for advancing the understanding of integrating emerging technologies in education. The outcomes of this research endeavor are poised to contribute significantly to the theoretical underpinnings of the subject, identify gaps in current research, and guide future investigations in this dynamic and evolving field.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **a. Classroom Interaction**

In the process of teaching and learning in the classroom, both the teacher and the student are involved. There is a process where the teacher asks or responds to questions, and the students, acting as learners, respond. The teacher and students interact in the classroom. "Classroom interaction" refers to what occurs in a classroom when language is present (Mathieu et al., 2021). In this sense, student participation in the classroom is a two-way communication process. To put it another way, that connection is fundamental to communications. Collaboration between teachers and students will enhance learning by promoting communication. The most frequent form of classroom interaction is question and answer, with teachers often presenting most of the queries. It is because questions provide the practice and feedback required for improvement. Interaction cannot be explained only by IRE sequences.

In addition, Teachers are expected to play important responsibilities in communicative EFL classrooms, such as mediators, facilitators, and monitors. They are also expected to possess the speaking skills necessary to support students in classroom engagement, also known as interaction techniques. In a foreign language classroom, the roles of the teachers and/or students are to direct and help students with completing linguistic tasks and language production through interaction.

According to Sundari (2017), language use during interactions helps learners access new information, collect and develop new skills, recognize issues, and identify and maintain relationships. Interaction between students is particularly important for teaching and learning in language classrooms. Language is employed as both a study topic and a teaching tool (Sundari, 2017). The teacher and students employ verbal interaction in the classroom as instruction.

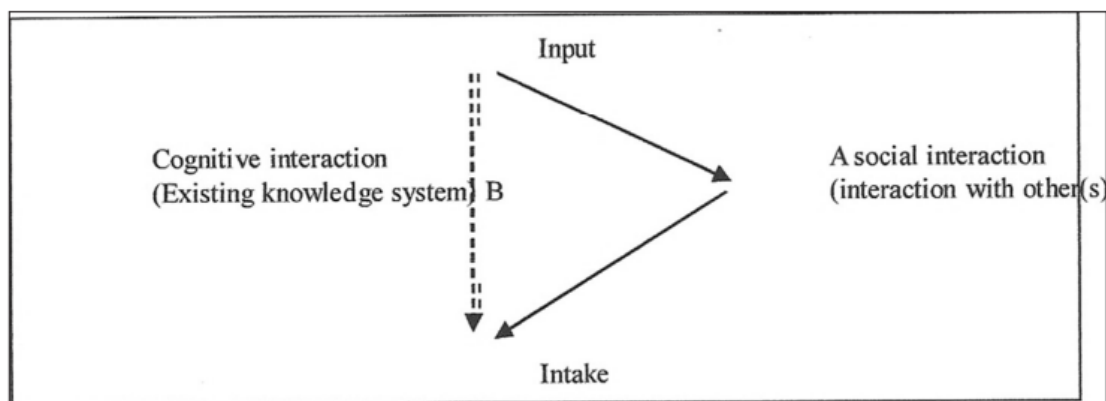


Figure 1. The Role of Interaction (Van Lier, 1988)

The role of interaction is illustrated in Figure 1, as well as the input and intake during social and cognitive communication. Van Lier highlighted the need to encourage acquisition since meaningful interactions mediate input and intake (Vatty & Gamlem, 2020; Sundari, 2017). In addition to input, Swain asserted that intelligible input is insufficient if a language learner does not have frequent opportunities to use the language (Sundari, 2017).

Language students need to be able to recognize grammatical mistakes and reconstruct language formation as part of their output. By generating various modalities of interaction in the environment, the teacher in a language classroom plays a significant part in giving students comprehensible input and enough opportunities to speak and write the language. Therefore, the importance of the teacher's role in facilitating language learning. The first is recognizing grammatical mistakes. Teachers are crucial in helping students identify and understand grammatical mistakes, providing clear explanations, examples, and corrections during lessons. Various exercises, such as grammar drills and error correction activities, can be incorporated into the curriculum to enhance students'

ability to recognize and correct grammatical errors. Secondly, reconstructing language formation, which means understanding how sentences and phrases are formed, is fundamental to language learning.

Teachers guide students in deconstructing and reconstructing sentences, emphasizing proper word order, tense usage, and other grammatical elements. Thirdly, generating modalities of interaction. A teacher can create a dynamic learning environment by incorporating diverse interaction modalities, including spoken and written communication, role-playing, group discussions, and multimedia resources. In addition, leveraging technology, including language learning apps, online resources, and virtual communication tools, can further enhance the variety of interactions available to students. Fourthly, providing comprehensible input.

Comprehensible input refers to language input that is at a level slightly above the learner's current proficiency. Teachers should scaffold lessons to ensure students can understand and engage with the material, gradually increasing complexity as their language skills improve. Lastly, offering speaking and writing opportunities. Language proficiency is not just about understanding; it is also about being able to express oneself. Teachers should create a supportive atmosphere that encourages students to participate actively in spoken and written communication.

The teacher and students' interactions in the classroom occur with each other. It has a specific pattern, the IRF pattern being one of them. IRF, or introduction-response-feedback, is a type of dialogue between a student and a teacher. The teacher replies that the student takes the initiative, and the teacher gives advice (Made & Sari, 2022). IRF or triadic sequence, the most typical aspect of teacher-student interaction observed in the classroom, was initially characterized by (Made & Sari, 2022), and it is frequently used in research on classroom interaction (Macbeth, 2000; Walsh, 2011). However, most of the literature on IRF sequences in classroom settings focuses on how they are carried out between an only one student and a teacher or between a teacher and a group of students.

According to (Prastiningrum & Hati, 2022), the *first* is initiation (I), which is the act of a teacher initiating a dialogue. When a teacher initiates a discussion with students in a group context, they do it by posing a question or taking other action. During a conversation or engagement, the teacher tries to persuade the students to put themselves

aside. Harmer says this is "when the teacher has to do something to get the students involved, engaged, and ready" (2009, p. 111).

Additionally, it is considered an essential element in developing an interactive language classroom because it provides students with ongoing interaction stimulation. After the teacher delivers the initiation, the students take out response moves (R), the second type of action. Prastiningrum & Hati (2022) claimed that the teacher's initiative is demonstrated by how they react to a participant's initiation move. It suggests that students engage to react to the teacher's instructions. Feedback/follow-up (F), the *third exchange* of a turn, aims to give feedback on the student's response. According to Dayag et al., feedback brings the cycle to a close by ending the initiation and reaction (2008, p. 5). It indicates that students receive evaluations or feedback for their responses right away.

## **b. IRF Pattern (Initiation, Response, and Feedback)**

IRF is a class interaction pattern discovered by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), which stands for IRF. Initiation: The teacher initiates the interaction to get a response from the students. Response: Students provide feedback, and feedback is given by the teacher to students. In this study, certain patterns were found, including complete pattern (IRF), semi-complete pattern (IR), and incomplete pattern (IF).

### **1. IRF (Complete Pattern)**

I : Good morning, everyone  
R : Good morning  
F : Alright, thank you  
I : Do you bring your book ?  
R : No, I forgot to bring it  
F : Okay, you can borrow another book at library  
I : What do you think about weather ?  
R : Hmm, I think the weather will be rainy  
F : Yes, you're right

I : Can you tell me, what time do you wake up at this morning ?  
R : Usually at Five o'clock  
F : Alright, good time

### **2. IR Patterns**

I : Have you ever read or hear about a.m. and p.m. ?  
R : Sure, I've learned it

I : Are you ready to go to campus ?  
R : Yes, I' m ready.

### 3. IF Patterns

I : Before we are going to the material, let's pray first. Who want to lead the pray? Siapa yang ingin memimpin do'a?  
F : Okay, kakak tunjuk ya  
I : Seperempat itu berapa menit ya?  
F : 15 menit  
I : Berapa menit kalau setengah ?  
F : Thirty minutes  
I : What pass it means  
F : Lebih dari  
I : How you say in English?  
F : Tidak ada yang mau menjawab?  
I : Half past ten, benar?  
F : Benar ya  
I : Siapa yang mau mencoba, raise your hand  
F : Tidak ada yang mau mencoba

Three patterns were identified as the result of the test utilizing the classroom patterns IRF (Initiation, Response, and Feedback): an incomplete pattern (IF), a semi-complete pattern (IR), and a complete pattern (IRF). A complete IRF pattern developed during the completion of the IRF pattern, accompanied by an initiation, a reaction, and feedback. When there were just I and R interactions—when the teacher initiated the conversation, and the students answered—there was a semi-complete pattern (IR). There was an incomplete pattern (IF) when there were just I and F. The teacher commented after giving the initiative and receiving no reaction from the students. The data above indicates that the lessons in the learning video were conducted well: the teacher asked questions, students responded, and the teacher offered feedback.



### **c. The Implementation of IRF in English Language Teaching**

Several studies were used in IRF classrooms, particularly while teaching English. This series's first investigation examines how Sinclair and Coulthard's IRF pattern can improve teachers' articulation in speaking classes (Purnawati, 2021). In order to investigate the pattern of elicitation exchange using Sinclair & Coulthard's (1975) IRF model, this study describes the pattern of teachers' elicitation in speaking classes at Ar-rurinary Islamic State University's English Department. The findings of this study indicate that the pattern of teachers' elicitation exchange in speaking classes includes original structure (IRF) and conjunction with bound exchange using Ib slots. The elicitation method uses bound initiation together with the original IRF model and modification (rewording or repetition of the query, nomination, and cues). Elicitation is essential for assisting students in developing their speaking skills. Therefore, lecturers should be more careful about utilizing technology to enhance their speaking.

The second study, "Analysis of Classroom Interaction in an EFL Speaking Class Using IRF" was published in 2017 by Rustandi and Mubarok (Initiation-Response-Feedback). This study looks at the IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback) reflection used in speaking class to identify the most common I, R, and F sequence. Teacher initiation, student reaction, and teacher feedback are called IRF. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) discovered this classroom engagement pattern. This study's results showed that teacher initiation—in which the teacher asks questions, elicits responses, and chooses who will speak next—reflects the nature of teacher-student interaction in speaking classes. According to the several IRF pattern types, students' responses predominately occurred during classroom activities. The classroom lesson's content and the teacher's strategy for getting the students involved will determine whether or not the student response predominates. Student participation will increase if the course material is relatively simple.

Additionally, a different study was relevant to the IRF classroom (Fajar et al., 2020). Using Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) in EFL writing classes This study's objective was to investigate the application of the initiation-response-feedback (IRF) model in an EFL writing course. IRF stands for instructor initiation, student response, and teacher feedback. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) first identified this pattern of classroom

interaction. The study's findings demonstrated that both teachers and students employed the IRF model in the teaching and learning process, notably in writing classes. The five teaching exchanges in this study were teacher inform, teacher direct, teacher elicit, student inform, and check, in accordance with Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) paradigm.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, the researchers have tried to outline some issues in discourse analysis: IRF interaction between Teacher and Student in English language teaching. In this attempt, researchers have mainly discussed the formation of discovered patterns of interaction between teacher and student in classroom discourse analysis. Based on the researcher's argument, it could be better to propose the following conclusions: classroom interaction, where there is a collaboration between teachers and students, will enhance learning by promoting communication. Especially in a foreign language classroom, the roles of the teachers and students are to direct and help students complete linguistic tasks and language production through interaction.

On the other hand, the most frequent form of classroom interaction during the learning process is IRF, including teacher and student talk. To discover patterns of interaction between teacher and student in classroom discourse analysis, it can follow use interaction between the teacher and the entire class, interaction between the teacher and a group of students, interaction between the teacher and a single student, interaction between the student and the teacher, and interaction. Interaction between the student and a group of students also interaction between students. Based on the previous study related to IRF, we can get new knowledge and insight about classroom discourse analysis, especially in IRF, and how to implement the IRF pattern in English language teaching.

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